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Memorials of the . . . Aldermen, . Provosts, and Lord Provosts of Aberdeen.

1272-1895

A. M. MUNRO.

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Memorials

OF THE

ALDERMEN, PROVOSTS,

AND

LORD PROVOSTS OF ABERDEEN,

1272-1895.

Sir DAVID STEWART
of Banchory.

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Memorials

OF THE

ALDERMEN, PROVOSTS,

AND

LORD PROVOSTS OF ABERDEEN,

1272-1895.

BY

ALEXANDER M. MUNRO
F.S.A. (Scot.)

ABERDEEN:
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PREFACE.

AMONG the royal burghs in Scotland, Aberdeen holds a prominent position for the completeness of its municipal history, and in no respect is this more clearly shown than by glancing down the long list of those who have held the chief civic position in the community. In making a retrospect of the municipal life of the burgh, we are indebted to the almost unbroken series of local records, both civil and ecclesiastical, for the material used for placing in relief the history of those who, in times gone past, have guided the counsels of the ancient burgh.

The aim of the following sketches is to gather up the fragments of history relating to the various occupants of the civic chair, and to group round them some of the incidents of their municipal career, with the possibility, it may be, of interesting not a few in the fact that, as Baillie Skene says, "this city hath not been a barren mother or nurse in our Israel in bringing forth and breeding up many eminent men and brave spirits, whereof there may be set down a large catalogue." The list of those who have filled the chair, so far as recovered, embraces the names of one hundred and forty-two individuals, who might fitly find a place in such a catalogue as Baillie Skene proposed.

How or when the municipal government originated in Aberdeen it is impossible to say, but there is distinct evidence of its existence, in some form or other, for at least two centuries before 1272, when the first alderman is mentioned. The scarcity,

however, of records during that period has made it impossible to recover the name of one single individual who can in any way be identified with the position of the chief civic ruler in the burgh during those centuries. For about a century after 1272, it is worthy of note that the information, scanty as it may be, is preserved in ecclesiastical rather than civic documents, adding one to the many proofs of the powerful position and widespread influence exerted by the old Church. This fact is the more remarkable in the case of Aberdeen, seeing that its civic records are the most complete of the kind in Scotland.

The title given to the chief magistrate in burghs has changed at various times and in different places, but the following are met with in Scotland:—mayor, burgh grieff, alderman, provost, and lord provost. The former two terms, mayor and burgh grieff, so far as is known, were never used in Aberdeen, but the other three designations occur in the order stated. The earlier records are, as a rule, written in Latin, and some difficulty has been experienced in the interpretation of the term "prepositus," especially as used during the fourteenth century. In the Exchequer Rolls there sometimes appear in a single year, as rendering the burgh accounts, no less than three persons called "prepositi," and it is supposed that the term, as then used, would more closely correspond with the burgh baillies as opposed to the "ballivi," who, at the same period, were more properly the receivers of the Crown revenues. In Aberdeen, the term "prepositus," as meaning provost, came into general use about 1460, although alderman, in use prior to that year, is continued to a later date in minutes written in English.

The older term of alderman after having been in disuse for over a century, was revived for a short time at the beginning

of the seventeenth century as applied to those members of the Council who had passed the civic chair. For nearly four centuries, however, the title provost was the official designation used by the chief magistrate of the burgh in signing minutes, deeds, letters, &c., although in press notices, letters, and in other ways to be afterwards mentioned, the title of lord provost was generally recognised, and it was not till 1863 that any question as to the use of the title was raised. The occasion was in connection with the arrangements for the order of the procession at the inauguration of the Albert Memorial in London in that year, when it became necessary for the burgh authorities to assert their claim to the title of lord provost, so that Aberdeen might take its rightful position among other corporations during the ceremonies.

Though the chief magistrate was officially designated provost* by the municipal authorities, there is a long series of precedents in favour of the higher title of lord provost. During the sixteenth century there are innumerable petitions engrossed in the Council Registers addressed to "My Lord Provost," while the large collection of original letters preserved in the city archives contains sufficient evidence that the title was applied to the chief magistrate not infrequently by all classes. On the 10th February, 1594-5, when Ludovick, Duke of Lennox, was made a burgess of the burgh, he "protestit befoir God and befoir my Lord Provest and Bailleis that he professit and avowit with his hairt the trew

* In many cases the authorities themselves are curiously indifferent as to the exact style, for in the minute of the election of 1817, the town's officer returns an execution of "a precept by Alexander Fraser, Esq., Lord Provost of Aberdeen," ordering the new Council to attend the meeting at which Charles Forbes was elected "to be provost."

religion." In a sermon by the Rev. John Paterson, entitled "A Sermon of Thanksgiving for the Safe and Happy Returne of our Gracious Soveraign, &c.," printed by James Brown in 1660, the discourse is said to have been preached at the desire of the "Lord Provost, Baillies, and Councell;" while the dedication of Baillie Alexander Skene's Succinct Survey, printed in 1685, is to "The Right Honourable Sir George Skene of Fintray, Lord Provost, &c." In later times the title has been in constant use in Acts of Parliament and other official documents.

In the recent controversy raised by Dundee claiming the title of lord provost in the Convention of Burghs, the cases of Glasgow and Aberdeen were cited as examples where the title was used without authority. This, however, is not the case, so far as Aberdeen is concerned, for the question was the subject of discussion in 1863, among those responsible for advising Her Majesty at the time of unveiling the statue of the Prince Consort at Aberdeen. Indeed the difficulty then raised was not so much about the title lord provost, as that of "The Right Honourable the Lord Provost," which was claimed by the late Sir Alexander Anderson, who was then chief magistrate. Mr. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, took the advice of the late Dr. Joseph Robertson, of the Register House, Edinburgh, in the matter, and, as the latter says, "I had no difficulty in placing before Mr. Gladstone a string of precedents extending over more than the last two hundred years, such as I think satisfied him of the right of the Provost of Aberdeen to be recognised by the Queen as Lord Provost." On the question of Right Honourable, Dr. Robertson was not able to report so favourably to the claim of Aberdeen, although he very carefully guarded himself by saying that his opportunities for investigation, at the date of Mr. Glad-

stone's request, had been limited. In this connection his opinion is valuable as to what would constitute a good claim, and is worth quoting as showing the nature of the precedents he relied upon for the title of lord provost. He says—"If you can show that the style of Right Honourable was used at a later period than I am aware of, of course my difficulty is removed, provided always that you can show that the style was not claimed merely by the Lord Provost, but actually awarded to him by persons of high rank, or in circumstances such as to make their practice in such a case of some authority." It will thus be seen that notwithstanding the value which some may be inclined to put on the precedents above-mentioned, the claim to the title of lord provost has rested since 1863 upon undoubted authority. In the discussion raised by the case of Dundee, it was frequently asserted that only by charter or an overt act on the part of the Crown, could the dignity be properly conferred. In the case of Aberdeen, it is held that the title of lord provost, which had been fortified by a long series of precedents, was acknowledged and confirmed to the city in 1863 when Her Majesty, in conferring the honour of knighthood on Mr. Alexander Anderson, designed him Lord Provost of Aberdeen.

The other burghs in Scotland whose chief magistrate is called lord provost, are—Edinburgh, whose right is derived from royal authority granted in 1667, and whose chief magistrate is a right honourable, in virtue of his having been a Privy Councillor *ex officio;* Glasgow * also uses the style of lord provost and right honourable, and claims these titles by their being recognised through usage in local acts of Parliament, &c.; Perth claims the

* Letter, Town-Clerk of Glasgow, "Scotsman," 5th April, 1889.

title of lord provost also from usage; Dundee holds the title by warrant, dated 10th February, 1892, under the hand of the Secretary for Scotland, signifying Her Majesty's pleasure that in all time coming the chief magistrate "shall bear and use and be known by the seal and title of Lord Provost of the City of Dundee."

The office of chief magistrate has always been looked upon as one of honour and dignity, and in that code of burgh laws, the *Leges Burgorum*, it is provided that the alderman and baillies are to be chosen "of the gud men of the toune, the quhilk are to be lele and of gud fame." During their period of office they are forbidden to bake bread or brew ale to sell within their own proper house, as actions derogatory to the office they held in the community, nor were they to act unjustly in the exercise of the power given into their hands, but without fear or favour or influenced by hate or love, "to do rycht till all men." On the other hand, the laws provide that the alderman, in the exercise of his high office, should not be the object of malice, since it is declared that "gif ony man dispersonis or missayis the aldirman in full courte, it behoves him, with his friends, te deny it with open mouth, sayand that he leyit of that he said of him, leyande a pledge in his wyl, cryande him mercy thairoff. And efterward he sal swear upon the holy sacrament that nevir evil of him be wate. And if he missay him ane other time, he sall be in the mercy of the aldirman and of his nychtbouris, so that he sall mak amends to him that he missaid."

In Aberdeen the provost was elected along with the other magistrates at the Head Court on the first Monday after Michaelmas up till the end of the sixteenth century, when

the date of election was changed to the Wednesday preceding Michaelmas (29th September), and since 1833 the election has been held on the Friday subsequent to the first Tuesday in November. The dates given in the list as applicable to the respective provosts refer to the Michaelmas meeting at which they were elected, thus John Cheyne, elected in 1593, continued in office till the Michaelmas election of 1594.

At several of these elections some remarkable scenes took place, which will be referred to at the proper place, but it may be here stated that it was not for want of the materials for a pleasurable meeting that disturbances often occurred. The first entry on the discharge side of the treasurer's accounts is almost invariably something like the following:—"Imprimis, immediatlie efter the electioun of the Magistrattis and Counsall at Michelmes last debursit for the wyne and collatioun spent in the Counsal hous to the new and auld counsallis and deacones of craftis convenit at the election."

It may be well here to explain the manner in which the election was carried through as provided for by the set of the burgh, as regulated by the Decreet Arbitral of James VI., 7th December, 1592, and the Convention of Burghs, 5th July, 1596. The first step was the preparation of an exact roll of the whole burgesses of guild, and from this list the old Council chose an indefinite number who were voted upon as members of the new Council, the thirteen having the greatest number of votes being declared elected. The Council thereafter elected four of their own number, known as the "old four," and from the list of deacons of the incorporated trades two persons as "trades councillors," thus completing the required number of nineteen persons. This part of the proceedings was conducted in the

earlier part of the day, and after an interval of some hours, the members of the newly-elected Council met along with the remaining fifteen members of the old Council and the remanent deacons of trades, making in all forty persons, and made choice of the provost, magistrates, and other office-bearers, such as treasurer, master of kirk-work, master of mortifications, and others. In the absence of any of those entitled to vote at the second meeting, power was given to supply their place by selecting any one of the burgesses on the roll. The qualifications insisted upon for any person on his becoming provost or councillor were that he should be a burgess and actual indweller within the burgh, and it is of interest to note that when the Marquis of Huntly became provost in 1545, he had first to qualify as a burgess. The provost, when so elected, was, from 1760 downwards, invested with the chain of his office, and presented with the silver keys of the city in token that to him had been entrusted the duty of safeguarding the interests of the burgh and its inhabitants. This latter custom of presenting the keys is believed to be of very early origin, although no definite date can be condescended upon when it commenced.

Lord Chief Justice Campbell, in his "Lives of the Chancellors" (Vol. I., p. 5, 1st edition), refers to a privilege enjoyed by the provost of Aberdeen in not going to the Bridge of Dee with the other magistrates to meet the Judges when on circuit, and explains the custom from the fact "that on one occasion the Grand Justiciar thought proper, for some imaginary offence, to hang a provost of Aberdeen at the Bridge of Dee; since which the Lord Provost of Aberdeen never trusted himself in the presence of a judge beyond the walls of the city." For this statement Justice Campbell was challenged by Baillie G. B.

Bothwell,* who attributed the custom, so far as not meeting the Judges was concerned, to the death of Provost Davidson at Harlaw.† The Lord Chief Justice repeated the statement in the second edition of the "Lives," and replied that his own explanation of the custom had also a local origin, and he preferred it to that of Baillie Bothwell.

Another custom of more recent date is that of placing two lamps with the town's arms at the residence of the lord provost, which are allowed to remain there during his lifetime. This custom is not confined to Aberdeen, but was begun here in 1838.

The Lord Provost is, *ex officio,* Chairman of the Harbour Board and President of Robert Gordon's College, and has a seat at the University Court and at the Royal Infirmary Board, while he is a member of numerous other trusts. He still figures, although with doubtful authority, in Debrett as one of the "Vice-Admirals of the Coast of Great Britain and Ireland."

Several lists of the provosts of the city have previously appeared in print, the first being given by Baillie Skene ("Philopoliteius") in his Succinct Survey of 1685, already referred to, and another by Kennedy in his Annals, Volume II., p. 230. Kennedy's list is by far the most complete of any, but in no case has he stated his authorities, and, though considerable trouble has been taken to trace the sources of his information, the result has been only partially successful. It has been thought advisable, however, to include all the names given by him, with this explanation that those for which no charter or

* *Aberdeen Journal*, 25th February, 1857.

† Cf. Notice as to this tradition on p. 25.

other authority can be cited are simply taken on Kennedy's statement.

My best thanks are due to the many friends who have kindly sent me information relating to various provosts, to those who furnished corrections on the Memorials as they first appeared in the daily newspaper, and to Miss Skene, Folkestone; Colonel Innes of Learney; Major Leith-Ross of Arnage; Mr. George Cadenhead, Advocate, and others, for permission to copy paintings of provosts in their possession.

A. M. M.

26 Desswood Place,
Aberdeen, *December*, 1896.

ALPHABETICAL LIST

OF

ALDERMEN, PROVOSTS, AND LORD PROVOSTS.

In the body of the book, provosts, on their first occupancy of the chair, have their names in large type, and the progressive number in Roman numerals (I.-CXLII.): subsequent terms of service are denoted by the names being in smaller type, and by the use of Arabic numerals (1-142).

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Memorials

OF THE

ALDERMEN, PROVOSTS, AND LORD PROVOSTS

OF ABERDEEN.

1272.

I. Richard Cementarius

(Kennedy).

In 1277 he founded the altar of S. John the Evangelist within the church of S. Nicholas,* and among the various annual rents granted for the support of the chaplain, there is mention of a sum of 10s. 8d. from S. John's croft. The immediate object of the foundation was for the repose of the soul of Elene, his spouse. In 1294, about which date he probably died, his executors grant an obligation to the chaplain concerning the revenue of this altar.

1273.

II. Mathew Greathened

(Kennedy).

The earliest reference found to this alderman is in a charter dated in 1273, where he is designed as one of the "prepositi," but, as already explained, this term, which may have misled Kennedy, does not refer to the chief magistrate, but rather to that of collector of the customs. In another charter† dated the

* Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 35. † Marischal College Charters.

day before the Feast of S. Valentine, 1274-5, he is designated as baillie, and witnesses a gift of an annual rent of 3s. 6d. from property in the Green made by Gilbert the Smith to the Carmelites, The name is here given as Grecheued, and still another form is Gretheuith.

In this same year occurs one of the earliest references to the trade of Aberdeen,* which is of considerable interest as showing the nature of the exports from the burgh during the thirteenth century. A vessel freighted by Aberdeen merchants, while on a voyage from that port to S. Omer, in France, was boarded off Yarmouth, and the following goods taken by one John Adrian of Winchelsea:—56½ sacks of wool, 5½ dacres of ox hide, 150 salmon. 200 "bords" of oak, a trussel of deer's hide and lambs' skins, and much other merchandise. This piratical act was the subject of communications between the two courts, but whether the merchants got restitution or compensation for their goods does not appear.

1281.

2. MATHEW GREATHEUED

(Reg. Epis., II., 279).

In a charter granted in this year by Martin the Goldsmith, to Walter Maleuile, of an annual rent of eight merks from various properties in town, there appears among the witnesses "Matheus Greatheued tunc aldermanus de Aberden." In the same testing clause Roger de Ry, William Alkoc, and William Marescallo, "tunc temporis prepositis de Aberden," also appear as witnesses.

1284.

III. **Malcolm de Pelgouent**

(Marischal College Charters).

The name is also given as Balgovny and Palogoueny, and is evidently territorial, the probability being that he was proprietor of the lands of Balgounie, near the old Bridge of Don.

* Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland, II., 2-3.

The Carmelite Order in Aberdeen obtained from David II., in 1341, a charter confirming their older gifts, and this deed of confirmation gives these old charters in full. From this source we learn that, in 1285, William, the son and heir of Gilbert de Fynocht, granted various sums to the Carmelites, and the deed of gift is witnessed by "Malcolmus de Pelgoueni tunc aldermannus." Malcolm was still alive in 1294, for he and Duncan, merchant burgess, as executors of the late Richard Cementarius, granted the obligation to the chaplain of S. John's altar, already referred to.*

1309.

IV. **Duncan de Malauill**

(Reg. Epis., I., 41).

His name is given by Kennedy as Melville, but the form given in the charter has been followed. In 1310 the Chancellor of the Cathedral granted an assedation or lease of the "Spittalhills" to Alecia Chapelane, and among the witnesses there appears the name of "Duncanus de Malauill tunc aldermannus."

1321.

V. **Duncan Kynnedy**

(College Charters).

Bethune, son of Constantine, by charter dated on the Feast of S. Simon and S. Jude (28th October), 1321, grants an annual rent of 2s. to the Carmelites from property on the north side of the Green. Among the witnesses are "Duncanus Kynied tunc aldermannus," John Mercer, Richard, son of Andrew, Nicolas de Lidele, and Thomas, son of Reginald, baillies.

The surname of Kennedy appears to have been common in Aberdeen at this time, for Peter Kynidy appears, in 1333, on an

* Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 35.

inquisition regarding the second teinds of the Bishop,* and David Kynidy returns the account of the burgh ferms in 1376 in the capacity of baillie.†

1326-28.

VI. **Symon Gelchach**

(Kennedy).

1329-31.

VII. **William Strabrock of Foveran**

(Kennedy).

In 1340 he founded the altar of S. James the Apostle within the Church of S. Nicholas, near the column on the north side of the nave, and furnished it with all the necessary utensils.

By subsequent charter, dated on the Saturday in the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (25th March), 1340, he granted, with consent of his son and heir, William Strabrock, three annuities or ground rents, amounting to £3 17s. 8d., from tenements in Castle Street, and one part of land lying in the street of Foty, which was formerly called Redbacks, for the support of a suitable chaplain to officiate at the altar, and to say prayers for himself, parents, and friends.‡ In 1401 William de Strabrok, a descendant doubtless of this alderman, furnished the altar with a chalice, breviary, missal, and suitable vestments.

1332.

6. SYMON GELCHACH

(Reg. Epis., I., 54).

His name appears on the inquisition appointed, in 1333, to inquire into the bishop's right to the second teinds of all the king's rents and fines—"Symon dictus Gelchach, aldermanus."§ In 1327-8 and 1337 he appears as one of the customars of the burgh.

* Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 54. † Chamberlain Rolls.

‡ Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 46; Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 67. § Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 54.

1333-34.

7. WILLIAM STRABROCK OF FOVERAN

(Kennedy).

William Strabrock received a charter in 1340 from Robert I.* of the lands of Foveran and Ardache, with three parts of Auchmacoy. Henry Strabrok, probably a grandson, conveyed, in the succeeding reign, the barony of Foveran to William Toryn [Turing], who had a charter of confirmation from David II.

1341.

VIII. **David Fyngask**

(Reg. Epis., I., 72).

His name occurs as one of the witnesses to a deed of gift, dated 12th September, 1342, made by Thomas Bonere to the Cathedral Church—"David de Fyngask tunc aldirmannus de Aberden." In 1341 and 1343 he is given as one of the customars. John de Fyngask, evidently a relative, appears on an inquisition in 1335.

1343.

IX. **Thomas Merser**

(Kennedy).

This surname appears in local records during the previous century, and marks the beginning of a migration to the north of the younger branches of the great families settled in the south of Scotland. In 1281 Duncan Merser is witness to a charter,† and in 1350 Thomas adorned the altar of S. Nicholas within the Parish Church with a tabernacle representing the Passion of our Lord. He was buried in front of the same altar.‡

* Antiq. Abd. and Banff, I., 364.

† Reg. Epis. Abd., II., 279. ‡ Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 13.

1348.

X. **Symon Lynton**

(Kennedy).

Skene* gives this name as Lynto, and quotes as his authority "an old evident," but, as a rule, Kennedy's names, where they can be compared with the original sources of information, are oftener correct, and he is here followed.

1349-50.

XI. **Robert Edynhame**

(Charter in Town-House and Kennedy).

His name occurs as a witness in a charter preserved in the Town-House, which conveys an annual rent of twenty shillings out of land in "le chekery" by Alexander Ysaac, son and heir of Ysaac, the clerk to John de Edynhame, and dated 18th April, 1350.

This John was most likely his son, as in an agreement,† dated 10th December, 1368, we learn that Robert was then dead, and that his heir was John. The agreement is with the brother-in-law of John, Thomas Lowel, to whom he conveys with consent of his two unmarried sisters, Agnes and Elizabeth, an annual rent of two marks out of property in the Gallowgate for behoof of himself and his wife Margaret.

From 1340 to 1342 his name appears as one of the customars for the burgh. The surname is frequently met with in records of this period, for in 1365 Henry de Edinham, burgess, witnesses a charter and Robert appears as Rector of the Church of Methlick‡ On the 31st May, 1380, George Edinham is a witness to a grant by Laurence Hill to the Carmelite friars.§

* Succinct Survey. † Reg. Epis. Abd., II., 284. ‡ Ibid., I., 113.
§ College Charters Mass, X., 26.

1351-55.

XII. William Leith of Ruthrieston

(Kennedy).

It is evident from the little that can be gleaned of Provost Leith's life that he was a man living in advance of his times. In 1350 he is said to have married a daughter of Donald, 12th Earl of Mar, and to have been the progenitor of the Leiths of Leithhall, Freefield and Glenkindie. It may be mentioned that the exact relationship of his wife to Donald is disputed, and the probability is that she was an illegitimate daughter, as she finds no place in the accepted pedigrees.* The issue by this marriage was two sons, Laurence (his heir) and John.

In the following year tradition has assigned him the chief part in a doleful tragedy—to wit, the slaughter of one Baillie Catanach. It is a fact often remarked upon that men's evil deeds live longer than their good, and, if this be so, we can give full credence to the story that the two bells, Laurence and Mary, which formed part of the old peal of S. Nicholas, destroyed by the fire of 9th October, 1874, were a propitiatory offering, along with the Justice Mills, for the deed of blood concealed beneath the cairn on the moor of Barkmill. That the story is not a fable, and that the bells were gifted by Leith in 1351, the evidence of the Chartulary of the church can be produced to show.

The following is a translation of the entry narrating the gift:—

"1351. An honourable man, William Leithe, in his own (life-) time adorned and decored the Parish Church of S. Nicholas of Abirdene with two large bells of great price, hanging in the bell-tower, at his own cost and expense, whereof the name of the one is Lawrence and the name of the other Mary. To whose soul may God be gracious."†

Regarding the names of the two bells, it is suggested that the larger bell, Laurence, or, as it was more familiarly designated,

* Davidson's Garioch, p. 72. † Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 180.

"Lowrie," was so named after S. Laurence, the patron saint of the Provost's family, as appears from subsequent donations, and that Mary, the smaller of the two bells, was so called after the Virgin, to whose honour he later on enlarged the Quire of S. Nicholas dedicated to her. Laurence had an inscription upon it which has been preserved, along with some additional matter added when the bell was recast at Middleburg in 1634. It does not appear that there ever was an inscription on the smaller bell, or, at least, it was not preserved after Mary was recast some few years after Laurence.

"In 1351, William Leyth, Provost of Aberdeen, presented this Bell to the Church of S. Nicholas of Aberdeen. Thereafter, a cleft having been made in it, at the expense of the Community it was recast in the year 1634 while Sir Paul Menzies of Kinmundy, Knight, was Provost.

To the only God be Glory.
Michael Burgerhays made me in the year of
our Lord 1634.
Lo, I, the bell, do not proclaim the praise
of that which is unholy.
I glorify the Creator,
I draw away the fear of thunder,
I mourn in solemn tones the departed,
I tell of the recurrent rites of faith,
I move the heart of man that is joyful.
Behold me, I am Laurence!"

Leith's gifts to the church did not cease with the bells, for, in 1352, he gave a priest's complete vestment of blue velvet embroidered with gold, and, in 1355, he enlarged the choir of the Virgin towards the south by the space of sixteen feet, and there founded the altar of S. Laurence and S. Ninian, almost at the spot where the stone after referred to is now placed. His transactions in the purchase and sale of lands were numerous and widespread, but his chief estates were those of Ruthrieston, and Barns in the parish of Premnay, by both of which he is occasionally designated. He was elected to the civic chair at Michaelmas,

1352, and continued to act as alderman till the Michaelmas election in 1356, and again for the term of one year from Michaelmas, 1373. While in this capacity we find him representing the town in the Parliaments, especially that held on 26th September, 1357, when he gave in the burgh's consent to stand surety with Edinburgh, Perth, and Dundee for the ransom money of their king, David II., who had been taken prisoner at Neville's Cross in October of the previous year. Pending the payment of the ransom, Leith went into England the following year along with several others as hostages. It would appear that this was not his first journey into that country, for, under a safeguard of Edward, he had made a previous visit to purchase wheat, barley, and pease on account of the failure of these crops in the north through unseasonable weather.* The only other official position which he held, so far as ascertained, was that of Collector of the King's Customs at the port of Aberdeen, a post which he seems to have retained for several years.

At his death, which occurred on the 5th August, 1380, he was interred in front of the altar of S. Laurence and S. Ninian. He left a bequest of an annual rent of 13s. 4d., payable out of the croft of John Cheyne, lying at the Crookit Myre in Futy, for an annual obit for the repose of his soul and that of Christian, his spouse. A second grant of 10s., out of property on the east side of the Gallowgate, was made for an obit in memory of Agnes Glenny, his second spouse, who survived till 1409.†

On a small brass plate placed beneath a sadly mutilated sculptured stone built into the wall on the west side of Drum's Aisle we read:—

The above stone represents the Chauntry | or Annual Mass to be sung for the Soul. | Founded by | WILLIAM LEITH OF BARNS, | Provost of Abdn. in 1351, | who with many of his descendants | is interred underneath.

* Rotuli Scotiæ, p. 802. † Reg. Epis. Abd., II., 216-217.

This stone leads us back to a remote period of our burgh history, and is one of the oldest links between the traditions of to-day and the events transacted over five centuries ago.

The Chantry stone, part of the altar of S. Laurence and S. Ninian, which may be looked upon as a monument to the memory of Leith, is divided into an upper and lower compartment. On the upper panel, under a richly-sculptured canopy, there is a female figure with four children kneeling, with an open book in front of them, before what had most probably been a cross, but the chisel of the reforming Covenanters has entirely obliterated every trace of it. The lower panel had undoubtedly contained an inscription, the shape of some of the letters being distinctly visible, but the shedding of the sandstone has rendered hopeless any attempt to recover even a part of it. The stone was carefully cleaned and the brass plate inserted in the wall below it about 1836, at the expense of Mr. Leith Ross of Arnage, one of Provost Leith's descendants.

It need only be remarked here that this stone is also claimed as a monument to Provost Robert Blinsele and his wife, from the

fact that a shield with the Blinsele arms now appears on the top of the stone. The conjunction of the two stones is, however, probably accidental as some of the other fragments preserved in the transepts clearly show.*

1360-62.

9. THOMAS MERCER

(Kennedy. Council Register).

In one of the volumes† of the Council Register, about the date 1460, there is a copy of a gift of an annual rent of 13s. 4d. granted to the altar of S. Laurence and S. Ninian within the Parish Church of S. Nicholas by Laurence Davidson. The deed of gift is dated 20th November, 1361, and among the witnesses there occurs the name of Thomas Mercer, alderman.

From the Chamberlain Rolls we learn that during this period of office Mercer had most probably to entertain, if not lodge, the Court when David II. paid the burgh a visit in 1362.

1366.

XIII. **Laurence Garvock**

(Old Charter).

There is a procuratory, dated 23rd September, 1367, by Emma de Dunfermline, cousin and heiress of Alexander de Dunfermline, in favour of William de Callabro, chaplain to Queen Margaret, John M'Kelly, John de Ross, and Alexander Madeth, for resigning her share of Longforgund, and among the witnesses occurs the name of Laurence de Garioch, alderman.

In 1357 Laurence Garvock was a Commissioner to Parliament as representing the burgh, and his elevation to the office of alderman had, in all probability, followed upon a series of services rendered to the struggling burgh in a number of minor offices. Although his exact relationship to the families of

* Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 192. † Vol. V.^{2}, 688.

Balnacraig and Caskieben cannot be stated, there is a strong presumption that he was a son of Sir James Garviach of Balnacraig, and consequently a brother of Andrew de Garviach of Caskieben.*

His seal which has been preserved among the Glamis charters (circa 1380), is an exceedingly pretty one, the charge being a chevron between three acorns slipped. The shield is placed in the centre of pointed tracery, round which runs the legend, "S. Laurenci D. Garwoc."†

1367.

XIV. **Laurence de Foty of Waterton**

(Kennedy).

This surname appears to have been not uncommon about this period. Thus, in 1342, we find David de Foty witnessing a deed in favour of the Cathedral Church of Aberdeen, while Sir Adam de Fothty, rector of Cushnie, renders part of the accounts of the tax raised in the Sheriffdom of Aberdeen for the ransom of the King. What relationship, if any, these persons had to the Alderman has not been ascertained.

It is of interest to note that the oldest name of Footdee was Foty, supposed to be derived from S. Fotin, and the road leading from the burgh to the Sandness was called the Road of Foty, or Foty Gate.

On 21st December, 1391, the Alderman assigned to the Cathedral Church an annual rent of one mark from the Abbey lands of Deer called Fothill, which had been granted to him in exchange for a tenement and land in the street called Foty Gate. This house is believed to have long remained the town residence of the Abbots of Deer.‡ A footnote in the Registrum says that

* Cf. Davidson's Garioch, p. 62. † Laing's Scottish Seals, II., 69.
‡ Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 189.

the tenement referred to stood on the ground afterwards occupied by Marischal's lodging on the south side of Castle Street.

The Alderman was married to Marjorie Blacwatre, and they, with consent of their son and heir, John de Foty, granted on 20th March, 1402-3, a disposition of a half of the lands of Blacwatre, with their pertinents, lying in the barony of Inverugy, county Banff, in favour of William de Dalgarnoe, laird of Fintray.* These lands had evidently been part of the marriage portion of his wife, or had fallen to her as an heiress.

Besides the estate of Waterton, which gave him his designation, he at one time held part of the lands of Rubislaw, and was proprietor of several crofts within the burgh.

From two of these crofts at the Denburn, formerly in possession of John Crab, he, on 1st April, 1403, granted an annual rent of 13s. 4d. to the Carmelite Friars.†

1372.

12. WILLIAM LEITH OF RUTHRIESTON

(College Charters Mass., X., 25).

In a charter by Laurence de Foty, confirming John Crab in a croft in the Barony of "Rubbyslaw," dated on 1st June, 1373, the name of William de Leth, "tunc aldermanus," appears among the witnesses.

1373.

12. WILLIAM LEITH OF RUTHRIESTON

(Kennedy).

1382.

XV. Alexander Bannerman of Waterton and Elsick

(Kennedy).

Alexander Bannerman was the son of Mr. Donald Bannerman, physician to David II. On 2nd May, 1373, he received a charter

* Antiq. Abd. and Banff, I., 423, 493. † College Charters.

of the lands of Slaty, within the thanage of Aberdeen, from Alexander, Bishop of Aberdeen, and in this deed his father, Donald Bannerman, is referred to as "quondam." This grant is made in consideration of the services Donald had rendered in his capacity as physician to the Bishop, and likewise for the great labours of his son, Alexander, towards the Church.

The lands of Elsick in Kincardineshire, with which the family have been so long associated, were acquired by the Alderman on 4th October, 1387, from Sir Alexander Fraser of Cowie, and the purchase was confirmed by a charter under the Great Seal, dated at Scone, 19th October, 1388. The estates remained in possession of the family till 1756, when they were purchased by the Town of Aberdeen, but since then the family have again acquired a large part of the estate by way of feu.

The other estate of Waterton had been granted to his father by a charter from David II. in the following terms:—"Delecto medico nostro Donaldo Bannerman terrarum de Clyntreys et duarum Achronnies lie Watertoun et lie Walton." The charter is dated at Scone on the 21st June, in the 39th year of the King's reign (1368). Waterton was held by the successive members of the family until Alexander Bannerman conveyed it to his father-in-law, John Johnston of that ilk, by disposition dated 27th May, 1611. The estate after this date passed through several hands, being for long associated with the family of Forbes.

Close beside the banks of Ythan the ruins of the house of Waterton can still be traced, but

> "Vainly is sought, as here you roam,
> The tower which marked the chieftain's home;
> The bending reed and islet gray
> Are all that watch swift Ythan's way.
>
> "A smooth, green knoll—an arch hard by
> Of rude and antique masonry,
> A straggling ash—a scatter'd stone,
> Is all that tells of Waterton."*

* Family of Forbes of Waterton, 1857.

The surname Bannerman, it is believed, is derived from the office of king's standard-bearer, and Fordoun relates that when Alexander I. was crossing the Spey to quell a disturbance in the north the representative of the name on that occasion in some way failed in his duty, and so displeased the King that he there and then deprived the family of their hereditary right. The chronicler relates that the office was then bestowed on Sir Alexander Carron, the ancestor of the Scrymgeours, who became the hereditary standard-bearers of Scotland.

It is further asserted that to mark their disgrace in time to come, the Bannermans were ordered to bear the Royal Standard *reversed* on their shield, and that rather than do this they refused to use arms. How far this, or, indeed, any part of the story, is true it is, perhaps, now impossible to say; but, in view of the legend, it is interesting to note that, in 1446, John Bannerman of Elsick had on his seal three bears' heads erased.*

The arms borne for centuries by the Bannermans, and said to be the old arms of the family, are gules, a banner displayed argent, and thereon, in a canton, azure, a S. Andrew's Cross, of the second; and for crest, a man in armour proper. Motto—"Pro patria."†

1383.

XVI. **John Tullob**

(College Charters Mass., XIX., 3).

The surname is also given as Tulch and Tulach. He was one of the customars for the burgh, and in this capacity rendered accounts from 1377 to 1380. In 1390, a Walter Tullach was depute chamberlain for the parts north of the Forth.‡

About the middle of the fifteenth century a family of this name with interests in Aberdeen, appear as holding lands in the neighbouring shire of Kincardine. Of this family was William

* Laing's Seals, II., 16. † Nisbet's Heraldry, II., 144.
‡ Chamberlain Rolls.

de Tulloch of Arbroath, who, on 10th September, 1444, granted an annual rent of 5s. out of Monymusk in favour of the Carmelite Friars of Aberdeen.*

1385-90.

14. LAURENCE DE FOTY OF WATERTON
(Kennedy).

Robert II. paid the burgh a visit in 1389.

1391-94.

XVII. **William de Camera of Fyndon**

(College Charters Mass., XIX., 4. Kennedy).

The authority for this alderman's election at Michaelmas, 1391, is to be found in a charter by Thomas Daltoune of an annual rent of 9s. out of land in the Shiprow in favour of William Dunbar, dated 1st August, 1392, in which his name occurs as one of the witnesses.

William de Camera, or Chalmers, was a younger son of Robert Chalmers II. of Balnacraig, by his wife, Helen Garviehaugh, and progenitor of that branch of the family designed as of Murthill, Methlic, and Cults. His first holding of land was in Cromar, near the paternal home of Balnacraig, and the estate, which was acquired by charter, dated 20th June, 1356, from William, Earl of Douglas, comprehended the lands of Easter Ruthven, in the lordship of Mar. There is, likewise, a confirmation in his favour of this property under the Great Seal, of date, 10th August, 1377. On 6th April, 1388, he obtained a charter from Adam, Bishop of Aberdeen, of the Church lands of Murthill, and in this deed he is described as the son of Robert Chalmers of Kyntore and Balnacraig. The grant of Murthill was for his life only, and for the reddendo of ten merks yearly he received the lands "cum bondis bondagiis nativis et eorundem sequelis." The

* College Charters.

words conveying the bondmen and their issue were omitted from the subsequent charter granted in 1402.* In 1390 he increased his holding in land by obtaining a grant of the lands of Findon, in Kincardineshire, which were held by the family for a short time. The Church lands of Banchory-Devenick were also held by him in tack for his own life on payment of one penny at the Cathedral Church of Aberdeen, under a charter from Bishop Alexander de Kyninmund II., dated 4th October, 1374.†

William Chalmers held many important public offices, not the least of which was that of Clerk of the Justiciary Rolls north of the Forth. This office was conferred upon him by charter from David II., dated 27th October, 1368, and it was in execution of this office that we find him present on 11th October, 1380, as Clerk of the Court held at the Standing Stones of Kingussie and again, in the same month of 1398, acting in a similar capacity at a Court held at Elgin. The Exchequer Rolls show that he was one of the baillies of the burgh in 1373, and acted as one of the customars from 1380 onwards. In 1398 he represented the burgh at the Parliament held at Linlithgow.

A faithful son of the Church, his benefactions were on a scale becoming his position. In 1360 he founded the altar of S. Katherine within the parish church of his native burgh, as appears from the following entry in the Chartulary of the church:—

"In the year of our Lord, 1360, an honest and discreet man, William de Chalmers of Fyndon, and burgess of Aberdeen, founded the altar of S. Katherine in the Parish Church of Aberdeen, and supplied it with the image of the saint situated above it, and a gilt chalice and other holy vestments seemly for divine service. And he was buried before the altar. On whose soul may God have mercy."‡

The principal event in municipal life which has come down to us as occurring during this term of office was the obtaining, in

* Deliciæ Literariæ, p. 263. † Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 118.
‡ Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 16.

1393, of a charter from King Robert III. granting licence to the community and burgesses to build a Town-House anywhere within the burgh except in the centre of the Market Place. This permission resulted undoubtedly in the erection of a house on the north side of the Castlegate.

The Alderman was married, but to whom we are unable to say, and of his family only the names of two of his sons have been preserved—Thomas and William—both of whom were elected aldermen, and will be noticed afterwards.

On 12th August, 1404, Chalmers was at Kildrummy Castle and witnessed the charter which conferred on Alexander Stewart, Earl of Buchan, not only the earldom of Mar, but the hand of the widowed countess.*

William de Camera died most probably in 1406, as in that year there is a reference to one of the same name in the Council Register who is described as "quondam." The accounts in the Exchequer Rolls also vary after that rendered in 1405, which also tends to confirm the opinion that a change took place before the accounts for 1406 came to be presented. A William de Camera, "pater," appears in the list of common councilmen up till 1412, when the break in the Council Register takes place.

1395.

XVIII. **William Andrewson**

(Reg. Epis., II., 294).

The name of this alderman is preserved in a charter, dated 3rd July, 1396, by Marjory and Margaret Strachan, daughters of the late Michael Strachan, and nearest heirs of the late John Edinhame, burgess, by which they convey an annual rent of 6s. 8d. to William Reid of Badfothale. Among the witnesses there occurs the name of "Willelmus Andree tunc dicti burgi aldermannus."

* Antiq. Abd. and Banff, IV., 168.

He was alive in 1408, as his name appears in the tax-roll made up in that year.

1396-98.

17. WILLIAM DE CAMERA

(Kennedy. Council Register, I., 1).

The last election, that of 1398, is the first one preserved in the existing Council Registers, and the earliest record of a municipal election in Scotland.

The minute of election bears that the Alderman was elected with the consent and assent of the whole community.

1399-1400.

XIX. **Adam de Benyn**

(Council Reg., I., 71, 163).

The members of this family seem to have been pretty numerous in Aberdeen about this period, as appears from the various municipal lists. Adam was a baillie in 1392. Symon held a similar position for several years about 1398, and in the list of baillies for 1409 there is the name of Alexander Benyn.

The Alderman was dead in all probability before 1408, as his name does not occur in any of the Council lists after 1401, nor is he mentioned in the tax roll of 1408.

1401-3.

XX. **Laurence de Leith of Barns**

(Council Reg., I., 209. College Charters).

The election at Michaelmas, 1401, is the only one recorded in the Council Register, but on 1st April, 1403, he, in his capacity as alderman, witnessed a charter of a gift by Laurence Foty.

He was the son of William Leith of Ruthrieston (12), and on his father's death he received a grant, dated 6th April, 1388, of

the lands of Capronstoun for his life, holding of the Bishops of Aberdeen, the reddendo being a silver penny.*

His heir was Norman Leith, whose son John was the progenitor of the Leiths of Overhall.†

1404.

XXI. William de Camera, Son

(Kennedy).

The Council Register at this date is very badly kept, and no record of the election at Michaelmas, 1404, is inserted.

The early history of this alderman is associated to a considerable extent with that of his father, and in some cases it is apparently impossible to wholly distinguish between father and son.

A son of William Chalmers of Fyndon, he appears at an early stage as taking an active share in municipal work. In 1398 Robert II. visited Aberdeen, and in the burgh account rendered in 1390 by him in his capacity as baillie, there is entered in the discharge a sum of £4, the value of a gift to his mother by the King.

From the Chamberlain Rolls for 1396 it is evident that he enjoyed some hereditary position as doorkeeper of the Exchequer, for in that year he was called upon to exhibit the charter by which he held the post. It is to him likewise that in all probability the entry in the S. Nicholas Chartulary refers under date 29th September, 1417, when it records the gift of a perpetual annuity of £6 13s. 4d. to the altar of S. Katherine, founded, as already noticed, by his father in 1360. This donation was made for the good of his soul, and also of that of Elizabeth, his late wife, and his father and mother. In this entry he is designed as of Findon, he evidently succeeding to this property, while his brother got Murthill.‡

* Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 186. † Davidson's Garioch, p. 458.
‡ Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 37.

In a charter conveying certain annuals to the Carmelites, dated in 1421, the gift was witnessed among others, by his two sons William and Thomas, as well as by Gilbert Menzies, his grandson.*

The date of William Chalmers' death is uncertain, but it must have occurred after 12th September, 1431, if the grant then made for endowing the altar of S. Salvator was by him. There is, of course, the possibility that this bequest of 40s. from the lands of Brynnas Tull in Buchan was made by his son William.†

1405-8.

XXII. Robert Davidson

(Council Register, Vol. I., 263, II., 17).

The elections for 1406 and 1407 are not entered in the Register, but passing references make it evident that Davidson occupied the civic chair for the period stated.

Without exception, perhaps, the name of this alderman is the best known to the citizens of to-day, for the hero Provost who lost his life in defending the burgh's liberties has been a figure standing out in our civic history as a comburgess whom all have taken a special pride in remembering.

The surname occurs once or twice in local records about the middle of the fourteenth century, but chiefly through the transactions of a Laurence Davidson, who has been already referred to as granting a charter in 1360, and one William, son of David, who witnessed a charter by Isaac the Clerk in April, 1350. Either of these may have been the father of the Alderman.

Robert Davidson appears, in 1395, along with William Chalmers, as joint Collector of the King's or Great Customs at the port of Aberdeen, and his accounts in this capacity extend to 1410. He was a baillie in 1398, and a member of the Council

* College Charters, I., 13. † Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 37.

in the succeeding years up to his election as alderman at Michaelmas, 1405.

His position in the burgh seems to have been that of a general merchant, with which was combined that of a wine merchant, or, rather, keeper of a taberna or wine booth, situated in the Shiprow, where in all probability he also resided, as the burgess of that period would scarcely have had his dwelling-house separated from his business. He appears very often also in the Burgh Court in pleadings for sundry parties, and this was evidently a matter of a profession with him. It is in connection with this calling that we learn of his possessions, for in 1401 he was admitted in the Baillie Court as attorney for John Wright in an action for the recovery of 13s. 8d., the amount of the annual rent of the property next his own in Shiprow. The accounts of the customs show that he also acted as agent by collecting the pensions or annuities for several persons of high rank, among others, Sir Malcolm Drummond, the first husband of the ill-starred Isabella, Countess of Mar; for James Stewart, brother of Robert III.; and for the unfortunate Duke of Rothesay.

The burgh accounts engrossed in the Council Register for 1398 show us Davidson in his capacity as merchant, for there occur such entries as the following:—"In the taberna of Robert Davidson for Alexander Stewart and various neighbours of the toun in various potations, xxs.—Item on account of Alexander Stewart for wine before Robert Davidson's gate, 11s."—the latter evidently a stirrup cup. The Alexander Stewart here mentioned was none other than the natural son of the Earl of Buchan, better known in his day as the "Wolf of Badenoch," who was evidently not a stranger in the burgh, as is shown by the numerous payments on account of the hospitality accorded to him.

Davidson's connection with Stewart was apparently that of a friend, for, when the latter became Earl of Mar, the Alderman's name appears on more than one occasion as a witness to deeds

executed at Kildrummy and Kincardine, while staying as the guest of the earl. One of these occasions was in December, 1410, when round the earl's board there sat as guests Bishop Gilbert Greenlaw, of Aberdeen, Chancellor of Scotland; Henry Leighton, his successor in the See, but then known as the Rector of Kinkell; Sir Alexander Irvine of Drum, Robert Davidson, and others. The gathering at Kildrummy may have been to spend Yule, but there is a possibility that it was to discuss the rumours that may by that time have reached Aberdeenshire of the invasion which was within the next few months to burst upon the northern counties, a danger of much moment to the well-being of the country at large and of vital importance to many of those then assembled round the table. The events which led up to the transactions of the next few months are matters of general history and cannot be gone into at any length here, suffice it to say, that, owing to a dispute regarding the earldom of Ross, in which Donald, Lord of the Isles, was an unsuccessful claimant, he headed the Highlands in a great and final struggle for the Celtic supremacy of Scotland.

Whether the possibility of such an attack had been looked upon as uncertain is not known, but the fact is made perfectly clear that when Donald and his host did burst on the semi-lowlands of Aberdeenshire, the invasion took the country by surprise. After successfully plundering Morayshire, Donald, it is said, offered the trading port of Aberdeen as a prize to his followers, and, all eager for the anticipated plunder, they hastened through Banffshire, Strathbogie, and the Garioch, till opposed by the defending force at Harlaw, near Inverury. This force, under the Earl of Mar, was far inferior in numbers to the hordes from the Highland fastnesses, and had been hastily summoned from the retainers of the lairds of the county and of the neighbouring shires of Kincardine and Forfar, with contingents of burgesses from the various burghs whose fate hung in the balance. Though small in number, they were inspired by the highest motives, and generally were well armed, a con-

dition which gave them a great advantage over their opponents, while their leader, the Earl of Mar, and several of his followers had, by their experience in the French wars, acquired a considerable amount of military skill, which they were enabled to use with advantage. The only record preserved in the Council Register of this interesting event is a list, evidently written in haste, of "those chosen to go out against the Katerans," and containing the names of forty burgesses. The number who went out to the battle, however, was, in all probability, considerably greater, for in one or two cases the burgesses took men with them, while the list does not contain Davidson's name. Of the force sent to meet Donald, says the author of "Don":—

> "From Aberdeen five hundred warriors came,
> All clad in steel and not unknown to fame;
> There Provost Davidson led the chosen band,
> And brave Hugh Ross next him had the command.
> Both men of prowess and superior force;
> One led the foot the other ruled the horse."

On the moor of Harlaw the opposing forces met, in the words of the old rhyme—

> "July twenty-fourth, St. James' Even
> Harlaw was fought, fourteen hundred and eleven."

The result of the conflict was that the Celtic invasion was checked, for although no decisive victory was gained over Donald, the battle gave him such a reverse that he found it impossible to implement his promise to give his followers the burgh of Aberdeen to plunder, and found it more prudent to draw off his force and retreat northwards.

The fight, from all accounts, was for the time a sanguinary one, and its character is appropriately expressed in ballad literature as that of the "Brim battel of the red Harlaw." This expression was well warranted when the victors came to count what the victory had cost them, for besides those of lowly rank, there were among the slain Sir Alexander Irvine of Drum, the

Constable of Dundee, George Ogilvy, son of the laird of Auchterhouse, with many others of quality, including

> . . . "the Knight of Lawrieston
> Was slain into his armour scheen,
> And gude Sir Robert Davidson,
> Wha Provost was of Aberdene."

Davidson's body was carried home from the field of battle by his comrades for honourable interment in the Parish Church; and the approach to the city of the mournful cortège has been well described in a ballad by one of our townsmen, the late Norval Clyne:—

> "'Twas the same band, returning all,
> The living and the dead; for there
> The frequent corses to the wall
> Their wounded comrades feebly bare;
> And there, unvisored, pale and dead,
> Stretched on his steed, where torches shed
> A dim and fitful ray,
> The Provost came, and o'er him spread
> The town's broad banner lay."

Douglas, in his "East Coast" (1782), says that the Council on this occasion passed an Act forbidding the chief magistrate to go outside the city walls in future on any expedition whatever, and in this statement he was followed by Sir Walter Scott, although there is no ground for believing that any such Act was passed, or that the custom of the burgh was such as to lead to any such belief.

The Alderman was buried in front of the altar of S. Ann, which had been founded either by his father or himself, as appears from the following entry in the Chartulary of S. Nicholas. After narrating several gifts made to the altar "of that potent man, Robert Davidson, burgess," which were made by the chaplain in 1361 "at the cost and charges of the said Robert, his master, and of himself equally," it proceeds:—"Which Robert, at that time provost of the foresaid burgh, built the town-house on the north side of the market-place opposite the cross, at the cost and charges of the community. And he was a man brave and bold, who prospered in all things, and died in the war of Harelaw, and

with him many praiseworthy burgesses, staunch and steadfast, rooted in honest principles and inured in all probity (whose names, for lack of time, and because of errors as to names, cannot now be set down as it were fitting), in defence of the town, and for the liberty of their fatherland under the banner of Alexander Stewart, Earl of Mar. And the said Robert was buried before the altar of S. Ann, in the foresaid parish church. On whose soul may God have mercy."*

Kennedy relates that the burial-place of the Provost within the old church was marked by an inscription on the wall to the following effect:—"Sir Robert Davidson, Slain at Harlaw, Eques Auratus." The knightly title of Sir accorded to the Alderman appears to be a mistake, which has arisen from the fact that Boece in his account of the battle has included his name among the "equites aurati" who were slain. Ballad and other literature has persistently followed the example once given, but the Council Register and the entry in the Chartulary given above, written not long after 1411, do not support the contention sometimes made that Davidson may have been knighted on the field previous to the battle. One other tradition connected with the doughty deeds of Harlaw is referred to here only because at one time it obtained considerable credence, viz., that the stand of armour preserved in the vestibule of the Town-House is the identical coat of mail worn by the Provost at Harlaw. It is needless to say that the probabilities are against the tradition, which, it is suspected, is not yet a century old.

Davidson's memory, along with that of two other aldermen, Fyfe and Roull, was long kept green in the minds of the citizens, as the following extract from the Kirkwork Accounts for 1591-2 plainly shows:—"2nd August (1592), comptit with Ion Mellin, painter, for makin quhyt of the est gevill of the suth Ill above the thregreisor settis, and the wrethin with owill of the bills to say to keip the memorie of Fyffe, Roull, and provest Davidson."

* Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 16.

The only one of Davidson's family of whom there is any record is a daughter, Margaret, who married David de Leslie of Leslie, unless an entry in the burgess register in 1400 can refer to the admission of two of his sons, Henry and Thomas, sons of David, and for whom he stands as cautioner.

When the rebuilding of the old church, now the West Kirk, took place about the middle of last century, the grave of Provost Davidson was opened in 1740, and the remains of the body were discovered, along with a small silk cap which had been on his head when buried. The cap was taken possession of by Mr. John Davidson, jeweller, and by him given to a Mr. John M'Gowan, as our informant says, "to pave the way to an introduction," as the jeweller had expectation of having some business to transact with Mr. M'Gowan. It is said the cap was exceedingly interesting to the investigators of the rise and progress of the arts of the country, showing, as it would, the state of the silk manufacture at that time.*

The tombstone of the Provost was in existence in 1811, with the inscription quite legible upon it, and when the boiler-house was erected in Collison's Aisle the stone was reversed so as to preserve it. The boiler was removed in 1874, but although a special search was then made, no trace of the stone referred to in 1811 could be found, and thus the only monument within the church to the memory of the gallant Provost who fell at Harlaw is his stone effigy, which at present lies in the recess of the Collison tomb in the north aisle.

1409.

XXIII. **John Fichet**

(Council Reg., II., 53).

His name appears for the first time as a member of the Council in 1405, and the first office which he held was that of

* MS. collection of notes, 1780-1805, in possession of ex-Dean of Guild Walker.

alderman. There are indications from the Council Register that he was a man of more than ordinary means, for in the tax roll for 1408 he is stented at a sum much in excess of that paid by the majority of burgesses. His name appears in the Council lists so late as 1435.

1410.

22. ROBERT DAVIDSON

(Council Reg., II., 101).

The Council Register contains no minute referring to any election in room of Davidson after the battle of Harlaw in July, 1411.

1411.

XXIV. **Andrew Giffard**

(Council Reg., II., 112).

He appears in the Council lists in 1405, and for some years after as one of the magistrates.

In a charter by Pa. Sharp to William Ross, chaplain, dated 2nd October, 1408, he appears in his capacity as baillie, and his seal, which is attached, shows a charge,—barry of six argent and ermine; in the sinister chief point a boar's head couped "S. Ade Giffard."* He was alive in 1424, as his name appears as a witness to a charter dated in that year.†

1412.

XXV. **Thomas de Camera**

(Council Reg., II., 126).

This alderman was a son of William de Camera of Findon (17), and brother to William de Camera, son (21). He received from Gilbert Greenlaw, Bishop of Aberdeen, on 10th August,

* Laing's Seals, II., 70. † Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 221.

1402, a prolongation of the tack of the lands of Murthill, which had been granted to his father in life-rent.* Like the other members of the family, he was mindful of the Church, and on 24th March, 1437-8, he endowed the family altar of S. Katherine "for the salvation of my soul and of Elizabeth, my wife—and specially for the souls of those from whom, justly or unjustly, I have or obtained any good things." The foundation consisted of various annual rents, amounting in all to £6 13s. 4d., and payable from the Gallowhills, Mary Croft, Gallowgate, and other places.†

His wife, who is referred to above, was Elizabeth Bindseil,‡ by whom he had a son, Alexander, who succeeded him in Murthill, and the following family—Mr. Thomas, Curate of Aberdeen; Mr. William, Robert (?), Richard.

Among the members of the Council for this year there were, besides the Alderman, three persons of the name of Chalmers, all evidently members of the same family, while the Earl of Mar had acquired property within the burgh so as to qualify him for a seat at the Council Board, as his name also appears on the list.

1413-14.

XXVI. **William Jackson**

(Council Reg., II., 190. *Kennedy).*

He was a member of the Council for a few years previous to this date, and in 1408, and again in 1411, he was one of the four baillies.

1416.

XXVII. **Thomas Roull**

(Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 38).

This surname appears among the proprietors of land both in the county and burgh for some considerable time previous to Roull's election as alderman. Barnard de Roule made resignation of the lands of Folerule so early as 1365. The Chartulary is the authority for saying that Roull was alderman in this year,

* Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 206. † Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 44. ‡ Ibid., II., 186.

but in the charter of William de Camera, dated 29th September, 1417, where his name occurs, he is called "prepositus," and, if held to apply to the office of chief magistrate, it is one of the earliest references to that term being used for this purpose.

As Dr. Joseph Robertson remarks, it is conjectured that this alderman belonged to the same family as that of an ancient bard whose works are lost, and who is only known to have written from the reference made by Dunbar in his "Lament for the Makaris":—

> "He [Death] hes tane Roull of Abirdene,
> And gentill Roull of Corstorphine;
> Two better fallowis did no man see
> Timor mortis conturbat me."

This good opinion would seem to be justified, for Roull was one of the three provosts whose memory was specially kept in remembrance by the citizens.

Among those who went to fight at Harlaw there are the names of John and Thomas Roull. The Alderman was alive and able to witness a charter at Kildrummy Castle in January, 1423-4.*

1419.

XXVIII. **Thomas Giffard**

(Kennedy).

The blank in the Council Registers from 1412 till 1433 prevents us from verifying Kennedy in reference to some of his names between those dates.

Of the same family was doubtless William Giffard, who grants an annual rent of 20s. to the altar of S. Mary Magdalene from his land in the Shiprow. The gift, which is dated 6th September, 1475, was specially made for the welfare of the souls of the original founder, Andrew Alanson and his wife, Walter Giffard and Agnes Ancroft, his spouse, and for the granter and Christiana, his spouse.†

* Collections for a History of the Shire, p. 555. † Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 299.

1420.

XXIX. **John Vaus**

(College Charters Mass., I., 13).

The surname appears to have been a common one about this period, as it occurs in many deeds, &c., relating to the sale and transfer of property. A burgess family of this name were proprietors of the lands of Mennie, and it was Richard, a member of this family, who granted to the Franciscan or Grey Friars in 1469 his property in Broad Street for their monastery. He is referred to in the obituary of the Order as "a man of pious memory, Richard Vaus, laird of Many, who gave the site of this convent to the Grey Friars, for which, it is said, he could have received a hundred pounds. He died 1478."

Gilbert Menzies, burgess of Aberdeen, for value received, grants to Donald de Caldor the lands of Drumnaglas, in the barony of Kerdale, county Inverness, by a charter dated 30th March, 1421,* to which Vaus is a witness, and is designed as being then alderman. Among the charters at Marischal College there is one dated 8th August, 1421, in which William de Camera, laird of Fyndon, grants two crofts in the territories of Rubislaw to the Carmelites, and among those witnessing the deed of gift the name of Vaus appears in his capacity as alderman.

Other references to this year of office are to be found among the charters in the "Registrum Episcopatus Aberdonensis" and in the "Thanes of Cawdor."

1421-22.

XXX. **William Kintore**

(Kennedy. College Charters Mass., I., 10).

This is the first alderman of a family several members of which held the office of chief magistrate. For the first year of office Kennedy is the authority, and for the second term a

* Thanes of Cawdor, p. 8.

charter, granted by Andrew Keith of Innerrogy, conveying an annuity of 40s. to the Carmelite friars of Aberdeen, and dated 26th October, 1422, mentions among the witnesses William de Kyntor, presently alderman.

1423.

XXXI. **Gilbert Menzies**

(Reg. Epis., I., 219).

This alderman is the first of a family which, for the next two centuries, had almost the entire control of the burgh affairs, as during that period its members occupied the civic chair for nearly a hundred and thirty years. Gilbert is supposed to have been a younger son of Sir Robert Menzies of Wemyss, in Perthshire, and, along with a brother William, came north to push his fortune in the trading burgh of Aberdeen. His name appears in the rental of 1408 as taxed for 12d., and in the Council list for 1412 he is one of the baillies. The transactions in land in which his name occurs are numerous, and show that he must have been possessed of considerable means. As already mentioned, he disposed of the lands of Drumnaglas, in the barony of Kerdale, County Inverness, to Donald de Caldor in 1421, and in 1435 he acquired lands nearer at hand. In the charter room at Slains Castle there is a copy of a charter in his favour and that of his wife Isabella of the lands of Lasgownie in that parish, dated 3rd November, 1435.* He also appears to have held several wadsets over properties in Aberdeenshire and Kincardineshire. One of these transactions was the occasion of the King granting letters to Robert, Maister of Keth, Knycht, and Alexander Ogilby of Inverquharity, sheriffs-depute of Kincardine, narrating that Gilbert Menzies, burgess of Aberdeen, had pursued at the Sheriff Court held at Inverbervy, on 28th May, 1442, John of Tulch and Wat his son for a sum of eight

* Collections, p. 393.

score, but without receiving satisfaction. The narrative relates that, finding no goods within the sheriffdom to poind, Gilbert "gert ouer maris (officers) set a strop on the lands of Porterstoune and the Orcharefelde," which action the letters uphold and direct Thomas Galmok, mair, to give Gilbert heritable state and possession of these lands in full of his debt.*

The authority for Menzies being alderman in 1423 is found in a charter by Andrew de Futhes, in favour of Alexander Forbes of the lands of Lytilwerthyll and Hairlaw, dated 10th February, 1423-4, and in which the name of "Gilbertus de Menzheis prepositus de Aberden" occurs among the witnesses.†

Besides occupying the position of alderman, he also represented the burgh in the Parliaments held in 1434, 1449, and 1450, his expenses on the first of these occasions amounting to £16, while his fellow-commissioner, John Vaus, had his expenses fixed at £9 18s.

In 1452 he founded and endowed the chantry or altar of S. Sebastian within the parish church of S. Nicholas.‡

The Alderman was married to Isabella Liddell, a daughter, in all probability, of the John de Lyddale who is mentioned as possessing property in the Shiprow about 1392, and by her he had at least one son, Andrew, his heir, who was afterwards alderman.

Gilbert Menzies was dead by 1463, as he is described as "quondam" in a charter dated in that year, and his monument was said to be in existence within the West Church about the beginning of this century, although no trace of it can now be discovered.

1424.

30. WILLIAM KINTORE

(Reg. Epis., I., 221).

His name appears as one of the witnesses to a charter granted

* Reg. Mag. Sig., II., 86. † Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 219.
‡ Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 26.

by John, son of Henry, burgess of Aberdeen, to Alan de Futhes, of the lands of Newlandis, dated 7th November, 1424.

It was during this term of office that the negotiations were completed for the ransom of King James, and for which the burgh, along with Edinburgh, Perth, and Dundee, granted an obligation in name of the other burghs of the kingdom for the sum of 10,000 merks.

1425.

29. JOHN VAUS

(Kennedy).

1426-27.

31. GILBERT MENZIES

(Reg. Epis., I., 225. Kennedy).

In a charter conveying the vicarage of Fyvie, and dated 20th June, 1427, the name of Menzies appears among the witnesses.

1428-30.

29. JOHN VAUS

(Kennedy, Burgh Seal).

Reference has already been made to the obligation undertaken by the burgh for the ransom of King James I. from his captivity in England, and it is supposed that as some, if not indeed, the only recompense, received by the burgh for the money advanced, the King granted a new armorial coat to the town. The old seal was in use as the "common seal" up till 1424, and the matrices of the new seal bear that they were made in 1430, and there is no occurrence of importance between these dates which would account for granting new arms except the part the burgh took in procuring the King's freedom. The seal and counter-seal, after having been lost from the custody of the Council for several years, were restored in 1883, and are among the most interesting relics of the municipal government

of the past which the Town Council possess. Both seal and counter-seal have the following inscription cut on the back :— Ye Zer of Grac mcccxxx. Jon ye Waus was Alderman and yes sel mad. The obverse of the seal shows a castellated tower on a shield, round which runs a tressure with sixteen fleurs-de-lis supported by two lions [? leopards], identical with the supporters as figured in the privy seal of James. The reverse shows, within a masoned wall with open gateway, under a canopy, a figure of S. Nicholas, mitred and vested, in the act of blessing, and on his right a representation of his famous miracle of restoring his three scholars to life.

1431-34.

25. THOMAS DE CAMERA

(Council Reg., IV., 113, 114).

In the Council Register, which now recommences and is henceforth complete, Chalmers renders the accounts of the burgh for four years, and thus the period between the terms of office of Vaus and Scroggs is accounted for.

1435.

XXXII. **John de Scroggs, Father**

(Council Reg., IV., 45).

Scroggs was a surname not uncommon in Aberdeen at this time, and the surname is frequently met with in municipal lists. This alderman was, in all probability, a son of David de Scroggs by his wife, Isabella de Turyne. This David rendered the account of the burgh ferms in 1384 in the capacity of baillie, and in the Council list for 1398 he also appears as one of the four magistrates. During the latter year of office he made a gift of several annual rents of the value of 6s. 8d. out of his property on the north side of the Netherkirkgate to the Carmelite Friars for the repose of the soul of his deceased spouse Isabella de Turyne.

The Alderman had been a member of the Council for some considerable time, and as early as the year of Harlaw (1411) he had occupied the office of baillie.

John Scroggs obtained some notoriety from the fact that he served on the inquest which, on 16th October, 1438, returned Sir Robert Erskine as nearest legitimate heir to his cousin the late Isabel, Countess of Mar and Garioch, in the second half of the earldom. In the subsequent struggle regarding the earldom, James II. held an assize of error at a justice-ayre, held within the tolbooth of Aberdeen on 15th May, 1457. James was, of course, fighting for the right of the Crown to the earldom, and scrupled at nothing which would advance his cause; so Scroggs was called before him in private as the eldest of the survivors of the inquest of 1438. In the presence of the King the Alderman was prepared to swear anything, for he made the admission that he had no personal knowledge of the propinquity of Sir Robert to Isabel, Countess of Mar, and that he and the others had been induced into acting as they did by the bland words and feigned lies of John Haddington and other counsel of Lord Erskine. Knowing the King's intentions, Scroggs confessed his error and humbly implored his pardon, throwing himself on the King's mercy for the remission of his guilt. With such a witness as the Alderman there could be little doubt as to the finding of the Assize; indeed, as the late Earl of Crawford says, the testimony of the other four witnesses—survivors of the inquest—"tended simply to corroborate that of the hoary scoundrel, John Scroggs."*

Another action relating to his own property does not increase our respect for Scroggs as one who would persevere in the right whatever the consequences might be. The Alderman was married, and by his wife Marion he had two sons—Alexander the elder and John. Both sons were also married and had issue, but by an arrangement to which the elder son was said to be a party, the heritage was to pass to the second son John and his issue. Scroggs died about November, 1459, predeceased by his son Alexander, and in terms of the arrangement, the heritage

* The Earldom of Mar in Sunshine and in Shade.

fell to the second son John, who asked the Baillie Court to give him sasine. Alexander had left a son Thomas, who appeared and objected to the arrangement, claiming the whole of his grandfather's heritage; and probably seeing that he would get scant justice in the local courts against his uncle, who had been three times alderman, he laid his case before the Privy Council, and obtained letters prohibiting the magistrates from giving sasine to John, the son, to the prejudice of the nephew Thomas.*

The Alderman was survived by his wife for some years, and in 1462 she, by her procurator, Robert Turing, prosecutes an action before the Baillie Court regarding the rent of a house in the Netherkirkgate.†

1436.

29. JOHN VAUS

(Council Reg., IV., 101).

The election at Michaelmas, 1436, does not appear among the minutes, but, from sundry references in the Register it is evident that Vaus held the office during this year.

1437.

XXXIII. **John de Fyfe**

(Council Reg., IV., 103).

So far as can be ascertained, the name of this alderman does not occur in the Council lists up to 1412, when the break in the volumes occurs. Fyfe appears to have carried on an extensive trade with England, and in this capacity his name is frequently mentioned, along with his partners, in safe conducts granted for their trade. In 1435, along with Mathew Fychet, he had warrant for safe conduct for himself and his servants to come to England for four months, and some four years later his ship "Gabriel" is licensed to trade with England for a year, while in 1453 his ship

* Council Reg., V.², 816, VI., 259. † Ibid., V., 462.

"Nicholas" was granted protection for a like purpose.* The nature of the trade between England and Aberdeen is well represented in the terms of the warrant for licence issued on 13th July, 1437, to Thomas Bernewell, alderman and fishmonger, of London, authorising him to freight his two vessels "le Holigost" and "le Marie" with empty barrels, salt to salt salmon, pewter vessels, "peaux de roe poyntz de roe vins feblez banape de fresure," and woollen goods, and in exchange to load salmon. This Bernewell had frequent dealings with the burgesses, and one entry in the Council Register would lead to the inference that he had lent money to the burgh, and had received in security the common seal.†

During the year of Fyfe's aldermanship, three important municipal laws were enacted, or rather re-enacted, for some of them were as old as 1394, and are sometimes referred to as the laws of that year. They were to the effect (1) that the alderman and baillies were to remain in office for one year only; (2) that the alderman should not spend more than 20s. of the Common Good without the consent of the majority of the Council; and (3) that the alderman, who then acted as treasurer of the community, should hand in his accounts within forty days after demitting office. The practical carrying out of these laws was evidently attended with difficulty, for there are innumerable references to these being disregarded, and this observation applies with special force to the third law dealing with the accounts. In this connection a minute dated 19th October, 1453, speaks for itself:—"This is the answer of the comoune counsaile and divers merchandis brethrene of the gilde of this burgh divist and concludit to be geffin to John of fife and his procuratoris til his clame of xl. lib. to appoint an assise to look and examine his accounts."

Fyfe was commissioner for the burgh to Parliament in 1456

* Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland, IV., 223, 232, &c.

† Council Reg., V.^{2}, 273.

and 1458, and, as a deputy chosen to represent the burgess class, he sat as one of the judges to administer justice in a Court held for forty days at Aberdeen in 1457.

His holding in property does not appear to have been large, but in 1448 we find him resigning in the hands of Duncan Kennedy, constable of Aberdeen, an annual rent of 40s. from the lands of Auchquhorty,* while in the following year he endowed the altar of S. James within the S. Nicholas Church with an annual rent of 26s. 8d. from ground on the south side of Castle Street.

One of his sons, Thomas, became a magistrate, and was for a time proprietor of Essintuly [Durris], from which, in 1478, he granted an annual rent of 13s. 4d. to the altar of S. Andrew. This estate he sold in 1488 to John Knollis, burgess of Aberdeen, as there is a charter dated 18th March, 1488-9, in favour of the latter and his spouse Mariote of the lands of Wester Essintulye, county Kincardine, which were resigned by Thomas Fyfe.† The seal of this son has been preserved, and was most probably like his father's—Couché: a lion rampant. Crest on helmet, a swan's neck. "S. Thome de Fyf."‡ Another son of the Alderman's was Patrick, admitted a burgess in 1446.

The Alderman's name appears almost continuously in the Council lists up to Michaelmas, 1467.

1438.

25. THOMAS DE CAMERA

(Council Reg., IV., 137).

1439.

31. GILBERT MENZIES

(Council Reg., IV., 177).

* Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 253. † Reg. Mag. Sig., II., 388.

‡ Laing's Seals, II., 62.

1440.

33. JOHN FYFE

(Council Reg., IV., 211).

Owing to the threatened troubles with England, it was considered desirable that the burgh should be placed under a military governor or captain, and Sir Alexander Irvine of Drum, who appears to have been a special friend of the town, was chosen for the post, and held it for the next two years.

1441.

XXXIV. **Mathew Fichet**

(Council Reg., IV., 253).

This alderman was most probably a son of Richard Fichet, whose name appears as a magistrate for several years about the beginning of the century. Baillie Richard's seal is attached to a charter (15th January, 1405-6) preserved at Marischal College, and represents a chevron between three fitches (pea pods), the shield being surmounted by tracery.

The Alderman, as already mentioned, carried on a trade with England in partnership with John Fyfe and others, and sometimes on ventures of his own, as, for instance, when in 1437 he obtained licence to bring salmon into England with his ship, "le Holigest," sixty tons burden. During his year of office the reprisals between England and Scotland appear to have considerably damaged the trade which formerly existed to the mutual advantage of the countries, and while English ships were taken into the harbour here, to be kept till the King's pleasure in the matter could be ascertained, Scottish vessels shared a similar fate in English ports. That the local trade was much crippled appears from a minute in the autumn of 1442 authorising Fichet and Richard Rutherford to proceed south for the recovering of the

ships and merchandise taken by the Englishmen, and granting that their expenses in the matter should be paid out of the common purse.

On 18th July, 1472, he granted, from various properties, perpetual annuities to the value of £7 17s. 4d. Scots to the altar of S. Michael, the patronage to which was made in favour of his grandson, John Colison, clerk, the second son of David Colison by his wife, Agnes Fichet. From this deed of gift it appears that the Alderman was more than once married, and that, in addition to his daughter Agnes, he had a son John, who at that date is described as his heir.* The Alderman probably died on 6th January, 1483-4, as an obit at the altar of S. Michael was celebrated for him on the Sunday after the feast of Epiphany in that year.

1442.

XXXV. John Marr, Younger

(Council Reg., IV., 281).

This alderman had been a member of the Council for some time previous to his election to the civic chair, while the offices of baillie and dean of guild had been respectively occupied by him in 1435 and 1437. As head of the Guildry or Merchant Guild his name is the first that has been preserved as acting in the capacity of dean.

Marr was one of three commissioners appointed by the burgh to the General Council held at Edinburgh on 19th October, 1456, and he appears along with other merchants as sharing in the profits and losses of the trade with England, particularly in connection with ventures in John Fyfe's ship "Gabriel."

On 10th August, 1473, he gifted certain annual rents to the chaplain of S. Andrew the Apostle's Altar within S. Nicholas Church, and vested the patronage in the hands of his son Alexander.†

* Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 79. † Ibid., II., 82.

The numerous extracts from Kirk Session records which have been printed within recent years have familiarised us with the nature of the censures imposed by the Church, but a minute during this year makes it clear that penance had occasionally to be made to the civil as well as the ecclesiastical courts. On 25th January, 1442-3, it is narrated that John Cadyow having removed a net from the north water (Don) belonging to Adam Hill, he is ordained to come with his brother before the Council, and on their knees ask the alderman, in name of the town, forgiveness, and pay to the kirk work 40s., and deliver up the names of his accomplices.*

1443.

XXXVI. **Alexander de Camera**

(Council Reg., IV., 319).

Alexander Chalmers was a son of Alderman Thomas Chalmers of Murthill (25) by his wife Elizabeth Blinshill, and a grandson of Alderman William Chalmers of Findon (17). On his father's death he succeeded to Murthill, by which he is generally designated. Some three years previous to his election as alderman there is a curious action at his instance before the Baillie Court, the details of which, however, cannot now be learned. The minute of the court is to the following effect:—"26 Feb., 1439-40.—Item the said day, Sanders of Chalmer put til the assise an caice the sclander that was put til him of conspiration, the quhilk assise fand and decretit that the said Alexander was quyte of sic crime."†

In 1452 his name again appears in a court action regarding a dispute between him and Malcolm of Forbes, both of whom were baillies that year, with the result that two of their servants, who had taken up their masters' quarrel with more heat than was necessary, were banished the burgh, and warned "not to be

* Council Reg., V.², 664. † Ibid., IV., 194.

found within it in tyme to cum." We may be charitable enough to suppose that the fault lay with Forbes, for a few years later he absconded with moneys of William, Lord Keith, for whom he had acted as agent.

The seal of this alderman, attached to a charter dated 6th December, 1449, preserves the earliest example we know of the coat armorial of the Chalmers family. It shows, couché, a demi-lion issuing from a fesse, in base, a fleur-de-lis; crest in helmet, a bird devouring its prey; supporters, two lions rampant—"S. Alexand. de Camera."

On the north wall of Collison's Aisle there is a tablet built into the wall, not *in situ*, however, with the following inscription :—" Hic jacet prouidus et honorabilis vir Alexander de Camera | de Murthill prepositus huius burgi de Aberdene qui | obiit viii. die mensis Octobris anno dni., MCCCCLXIII., cuius anime patietur deus omnino." A translation of which may be given as—Here lies a prudent and honourable man, Alexander Chalmers of Murthill, provost of this burgh of Aberdeen, who died on the eighth of October, A.D. 1463, whose soul God will wholly absolve. Menteith, in his *Theater of Mortality*, gives the date of the inscription as 1413, and this has been faithfully copied by subsequent writers who have taken notice of the inscription, although a close examination shows that the figure taken for x is really a combination of l and x, and must stand for lx., as there was no Alexander Chalmers in the civic chair till 1443.

The family of the Alderman, besides his heir, Alexander, consisted of Gilbert, married to a daughter of John Anderson; Mr. John, probably the same as Sir John, chaplain at S. Ninian's altar; Sir Andrew, also a chaplain; and Thomas, who was for some time one of the magistrates, and died prior to 1488.

1444-45.

29. JOHN VAUS

(Council Reg., IV., 359, 415).

During this term of office, which lasted for two years, the burgh was called on to use its influence with the Earl of Ross for the liberation of certain Englishmen he had taken prisoners and conveyed to the North. The King, by a letter dated at Stirling, 20th March, 1444-5,* after informing the magistrates that "divers prisoners Inglismen are arrestit and withhaldin in the northe partis of oure lande agayne the natur of our trewis be seruitours and men pertenying to our derrast cosing the Erle of Ross," calls upon them to assist the bearer of the letter "in lousing of the said persounes Inglismen, as yhe love the gude of our trewis and furthering of yhoureself." A letter was accordingly written and signed by the Alderman, begging the Earl to obey the King's mandate, and set free the English prisoners.

Several matters of municipal importance came before the Council for discussion during this year, and among others a resolution was passed that in the matter of the Candlemas pageants and the like the Abbot of Bon-Accord (known in England as the Lord of Misrule), who superintended the arrangements, should have no more fees given him; and further, that no abbot be elected, but that the alderman for the year, with the assistance of one of the baillies, should discharge the duties of the office. At the same time it was moved that an endeavour be made to obtain the right to the office of Sheriffs within the town, and the deliverance was:—"It is seen speidful to the Counsale to trete giv thai may get the fredome to be schirrefis within the toun, and to mak a cost tharapon." The application, if it was ever made, must have proved unsuccessful, as the privilege was not conferred on the burgh until the time of Charles I., who conveyed the privilege in the charter of 1639.

* Council Reg., V.[2], 700, 727.

Vaus' services to the burgh were evidently appreciated to some extent by his fellow-Councillors, as is attested by a minute dated 11th December, 1447, which narrates that "For his gude meritis done in tyme bigane, he is allowit to assigne the half net of the rake [fishing] set to him to ony friende he chooses except Lordis." About the last notice of Vaus in the Council Register* is that under date 10th July, 1447, in reference to some difference of opinion with the baillies, the nature of which is not recorded. The minute says—"The assise has fundyn that Johne the Waus distrobillet the court in presence of the bailzeis and the dome delayit as zett." Whether the "doom" was ever pronounced is not recorded; most probably not, for the Alderman was dead by the 6th August, 1448. He appears to have had a large family, the names of the sons, so far as recorded, being Richard, probably laird of Mennie, the donor of the Grey friars place in Broad Street; Gilbert, Mr. Martin, William, John, and James.

1446.

36. ALEXANDER DE CAMERA

(Council Reg., IV., 422).

1447.

XXXVII. **William Scherar**

(Council Reg., IV., 489).

There is some reason for supposing that this alderman was a son of John Scherar, who in 1400 was one of the magistrates, and who, along with Laurence Crag, founded or endowed the altarage of S. Duthac. To this same altar, on 31st July, 1464, the Alderman, with the consent and assent of Isabella, his "most dear wife," gave several annual rents from properties in the burgh in augmentation of a perpetual chaplaincy for one fit chaplain at the altar of S. Duthac, anciently founded in part by the Council and community, besides several other grants for like purposes.†

William Scherar was proprietor of the lands of Kinellar for

* Council Reg., IV., 483. † Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 17.

some time, as there is a charter, dated 2nd July, 1465, under the Great Seal, confirming the grant made by William Scherar, lord of "Kynnellor," and Elizabeth [*sic.*], his spouse, of these lands in favour of Henry Forbes.* He had also property within the burgh of Kintore, as appears from a charter of date 4th July, 1459.† The Alderman, by his wife, Isabella Rutherford, not Elizabeth, as stated in the Great Seal Register, had several sons, among whom were Mr. Duncan, better known as the Rector of Clatt; Andrew, and Alexander. She was alive in 1464, and gave her consent to the sale of Kinellar.

The arms borne by Scherar, as they appear on his seal, were three daggers, paleways, surmounted by three boars' heads, couped.‡

There are several references to the arrangements made regarding the patronage of the altar of S. Duthac, from which it appears that the Rector decorated the altar with a silver chalice, desk, books, &c., and that the patronage, after the death of the Alderman, was to be in Mr. Duncan, whom failing, his brothers Andrew and Alexander.§ Both Scherar and his wife were dead by 15th November, 1488, when the Rector made a grant of an annual rent of 40s. for bread and wine to be used in the daily celebration of the Eucharist, in consideration that the chaplains should pray for him, and celebrate the anniversaries of his father and mother, the former on the Sunday following the 27th January, and the latter on the Sunday following the 28th July.

The principal event during this year of office was the commencement made with the defences of the burgh, which included the building, or in some cases rebuilding, of several of the ports. In this connection we find that in 1449 the Alderman was found due to the community the sum of £34 of the account for "bigging the yhett" of the Overkirkgate port. King James II. also visited the burgh for the first time in July, 1448.

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* Reg. Mag., Sig. II., 178[2].

† Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 139.

‡ Charter, 31st July, 1464.

§ Council Reg., V.[2], 834.

During 1447 one of those general taxations or stents took place, which enable us to form some opinion as to the population of the burgh. On this occasion the list is fully given, and it shows 132 persons' names in the Crooked Quarter, 142 in the Even Quarter, 80 in the Futty Quarter, and 87 in the Green Quarter—a total of 441, giving a probable population of about 2,000 persons.

1448.

33. JOHN FYFE

(Council Reg., V., 17).

1449-50.

XXXVIII. **John Scroggs, Son**

(Council Reg., V., 59, 99).

A son of John Scroggs (32) by his wife Marion. He died in the beginning of 1473, and his only daughter Marjorie, the wife of David Kintore, burgess, was served heir to his property in the Upperkirkgate.

1451-52.

33. JOHN FYFE

(Council Reg., V., 129, 161).

A matter of considerable importance as affecting the trade of the burgh was successfully accomplished during this term of Fyfe's aldermanship, in the obtaining a charter from James abolishing, so far as the community was concerned, all custom on salt and skins. The importance of this concession is to be measured in the light that these two articles—one an import and the other an export—were staple goods.

The charter narrates that the grant was made on account of gratuitous services rendered to the King; but, notwithstanding

* Council Reg., VI., 260.

this, there is a stent roll in the Council Register for the purchase of this particular concession, which shows that the sum of £58 13s. 4d. was collected for the purpose.

1453.

35. JOHN MARR

(Council Reg., V., 183).

1454.

XXXIX. **Andrew Menzies**

(Council Reg., V., 211).

This alderman was the son and heir of Alderman Gilbert Menzies (31), and succeeded to part of the property of Pitfoddels, near Aberdeen, which estate was to be the designation of the family for close on four centuries. In 1457 he had precept of sasine from Andrew Rede of "Badfothelis" to infeft him in the half of Middle "Badfothalis," given in exchange for the lands of Wester "Badfothalis."

In various actions recorded in the Council Register, his name appears as forespeaker for one of the parties, while in 1457 he was one of the burgesses chosen to sit and administer the law. The following year he was one of the Commissioners who represented the burgh at the Parliament held in Edinburgh. He was married to Margaret Arbuthnot, a daughter of Hugh Arbuthnot of that Ilk,* and had by her a family, of whom Alexander, his heir, succeeded to the property of Pitfoddels on his death, which took place prior to 1491.

1455.

38. JOHN SCROGGS, Son

(Council Reg., V., 244).

In January of this year (1455-56) the Queen of James II. visited the burgh, and was received with much ceremony, while,

* Nisbet, Vol. II., 83[a].

in addition to the usual propine of wax, sweets, &c., the Council voted her a grant of 100 merks, and this notwithstanding the fact that in order to raise the necessary funds the properties of the burgh had to be let on much longer leases than had been the practice till then.

1456-57.

33. JOHN FYFE

(Council Reg., V., 279, 309).

During this term of office a resolution was come to by the Council to relieve the burgh court of a portion of the work falling to be decided in it by appointment of six persons of the Council, who should in future sit every Monday to settle all small complaints and disputes regarding sums under £5, and they were authorised to charge the "wranger" 12d. for every pound in dispute. Another important innovation was the appointment of several baxters to visit the bakers' shops and stamp the bread as of the proper weight and quality, it being declared illegal to sell any bread without the mark.

1458-60.

XL. **Richard Kintore**

(Council Reg., V., 347, 375, 409).

Although unable to state the exact relationship to Alderman William Kintore (30), the evidence clearly shows that Richard belonged to the same family, if, indeed, he was not a son of the former alderman. Some twenty years previous to this date he served as Abbot of Bon-Accord, and on 13th May, 1440, the Council granted him the entry fee of a burgess of guild in payment of his expenses incurred at the play of the "Haliblude at the Wyndmylhill."

In 1459 Canon John Clat founded S. Thomas's Hospital as part of the equipment of the Parish Church, and his executors

purchased from the Alderman, as an investment, nineteen roods of land in the burgh of Kintore.* The conveyance narrates that the Alderman was a burgess of that burgh. In all probability he was a native, as the surname is evidently territorial.

During this term of office the term "prepositus" takes the place of "aldermanus" in Latin deeds, although in the Council Register the term alderman is still retained.

During 1458 a project for bridging the Dee was brought before the Council, and an agreement was come to with John Levingston, the vicar of Inverugy, to build the bridge, the Council to contribute the sum of £20 for ten years.† This is the first and last mention of the scheme, which seems to have fallen through, probably, for want of the necessary funds.

By letters dated 9th October, 1458, James II. granted power to the Council to seize all skins, wool, &c., exported out of the sheriffdom which had not paid custom, the burgh to share equally with the Crown in the escheat.

The Alderman was dead by May, 1482, when his relict Marion pursued an action for 11 bolls of bere, and his son Robert was served heir to his father shortly after the above date. Another son was probably John Kintor, who was for several years one of the magistrates.

1461.

39. ANDREW MENZIES

(Council Reg., V., 431).

1462-66.

40. RICHARD KINTORE

(Council Reg., V., 457, 489, 515, 563, 588).

The continued hostilities with England and other causes induced the Council in 1462 to enter into a bond of man-rent with the Earl of Huntly, whereby each undertook to aid the

* Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 139. † Council Reg., V.², 808.

other with counsel, and, if need be, with more substantial help. Not many months elapsed before the town was called upon to implement the bargain by aiding Huntly against the Earl of Ross, who had openly espoused the English cause, and was plundering the neighbourhood of Inverness. The reply of the Alderman to the Earl's summons was to the effect that having called the neighbours of the town who were "set at all thair gudely power to pleyss his lordship, yet they had decided that they could not come to such a hasty tryst as he had set at the Cabrach." The chief reason given by the Alderman is thus worded—"Gude fathe we hafe na hors na man yet nane to cum becauss of the warnying of the cuntre of gentil men to cum to your Lordschippis at this tryst."* Another reason given was the command of the King not to leave the burgh as an English fleet was off the coast, and it may be that the heavy price paid for the victory of Harlaw was too green in the recollection of most of the "nighbouris."

1467-69.

XLI. Alexander Chalmers of Murthill

(Council Reg., V., 614; *VI.*, 73, 94).

Alexander Chalmers was the eldest son of Alderman Alexander de Camera (36), and succeeded to the estate of Murthill on his father's death in 1463. During the period of his office the community resolved to enlarge their parish church by adding a choir, and in this work they were greatly aided by the Provost's assistance and counsel. Indeed his interest was so great that on the 18th September, 1477, he was appointed principal master of work "of the biging of Sanct Nicholace queyr for twa yeris to cum." It was in the prosecution of this work, and doubtless in recognition of his services, that his arms occupy the position of honour on one of the bosses in the roof of S. Mary's Chapel.

* Council Reg., V., 485.

Alexander Chalmers appears to have been twice married, first to Janet Leslie, and secondly to Elizabeth Cullen, and by these marriages he had at least two sons, Alexander, who succeeded him, and Thomas, who is identified as the first laird of Strichen.

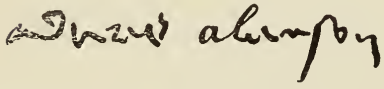
Provost Alexander Chalmers died in 1497.

1470.

XLII. **Andrew Alanson**

(Council Reg., VI., 121).

The surname of this provost is very often given as Allanson. He is best remembered by his various and generous grants for religious purposes, the first of which was made on the 28th March, 1463, and consisted of an annual rent of twenty-six shillings and eight pence to the Chancellor of the Cathedral—Duncan Lychtoun—out of the Sowcroft and a croft near the Crooked Myre.* In 1467 he acquired an annual rent of 10 merks from Thomas de Mawle, Lord Panmure, out of the lands of Morfy, in Kincardine, and this property he conveyed to Laurence Duncan, vicar of Longley, by a charter dated at Aberdeen on 6th May, 1475.† Another of his bequests was that made to S. Nicholas Church in the founding and endowing of a perpetual chaplaincy in connection with the altar of S. Mary Magdalene, on which an obit and anniversary was performed on Sunday after the Feast of S. Bartholomew. His term of office saw the last of the friar order established in Aberdeen, when the Franciscans took possession, in 1471, of the piece of ground on the east side of Broad Street, granted to them two years previously. In the instrument of sasine it is narrated that Provost Alanson, on the part of the community, renounced, in favour of the brethren, an annuity of £26 8s., payable out of the piece of ground to the chaplain of the altar of S. John the



* Reg. Epis. Abd., I., 286. † Ibid., I., 298.

Baptist, "as his predecessor Alexander Chalmers in the time of his provostship is known to have done." The Provost, along with a William Alanson, had a safe conduct to pass through England with the Bishop of Aberdeen, and in 1465 he had a safe conduct granted to him for trading with England for one year.*

An example of the seal used by this provost is preserved among the charters at Marischal College, and shows a design which, in all probability, was a reproduction of the mark used by him in trade. The design is two plain crosses reversed and joined at the points by a connecting line, the latter bisected by a straight line at right angles to it.

Provost Alanson was dead by the early part of 1475, as his wife Cristina Cadiou, is then referred to as spouse to the late Andrew Alanson in an action pursued by her and Sir William Donaldson, chaplain, as executors of the Provost. He does not seem to have had any family who survived him, as in 1473 he conveys the patronage of the chaplaincies founded by him to his brother Thomas. His relict, described in the chartulary as "a woman, prudent and of good repute," gifted a complete set of costly vestments of blue velvet and a cope of silk for the use of the chaplains serving at S. Magdalene's altar, and provided a silver chalice weighing thirty-three ounces.†

1471.

40. RICHARD KINTORE

(Council Reg., VI., 160).

1472.

XLIII. **Andrew Scherar**

(Council Reg., VI., 199).

Andrew Scherar was a son of Alderman William Scherar (37), by his wife, Isabella Rutherford. From an assignation of

* Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland, IV., 272, 276.
† Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 185.

his salmon fishings in 1490 in favour of his son and heir, William Scherar, we know that he was still alive at that date.

1473.

42. ANDREW ALANSON

(Council Reg., VI., 272).

In the municipal polity there was as yet no separate treasurer, the provost still continuing to act in that capacity, and hence continual disputes arose between the alderman, baillies, and members of the Council regarding the custody of the common seal. All tacks and documents of importance could only be rendered valid by having the seal attached, and, naturally, the custody of the seals was one of very great importance. In 1474, the Provost, however, got the Council to pass a resolution that in future the common seal and the secret seal should be delivered up freely to the alderman for the time, and that the ultimate keeping be at his will.

1474.

41. ALEXANDER CHALMERS OF MURTHILL

(Council Reg., VI., 311).

1475.

XLIV. **Alexander Menzies**

(Council Reg., VI., 395).

This provost was a son of Alderman Andrew Menzies (39), by his spouse, Margaret Arbuthnot, and on his father's death, which took place prior to 1491, he succeeded to the estate of Pitfoddels.

In 1495, he was sent, on behalf of the community, to Edinburgh to obtain a licence for the burgesses to stay at home from the King's levy or "oist," which was then being raised for

an expedition into England in support of the claims of Perkin Warbeck, and his expenses on that occasion amounted to 5s. 6d. sterling. Among the Marischal College charters there is one, dated 20th January, 1482-3, in which Alexander Menzies, burgess, conveys to the prior and convent of the Carmelite Friars in Aberdeen an annuity of 6s. 8d. from his lands of the hostilage of Colle [Cowie], lying on the west side of the town of Colle.* On 14th November, 1503, while at Edinburgh, he made a grant of £3 out of his lands of Balmady in the barony of Grandholm, with consent of the superior, Alexander, Earl of Buchan, for the purpose of supplying and maintaining a lamp to burn continually before the Sacrament at the high altar in S. Nicholas Church. The gift was made specially for the salvation and repose of the souls of James III. and IV., with their queens, and for those of his father and mother, and for Elizabeth Leslie, his spouse.† This Elizabeth Leslie was a daughter of Sir William Leslie, fourth baron of Balquhain, by his wife, Euphemia Lindsay, and by her the Provost had a family, of whom the eldest, Gilbert, was elected Town-Clerk in 1502. The office was purchased for him by his father for the sum of forty merks, and the salary attached to the clerkship at this time was twelve merks.

The armorial coat of the Menzies family was ermine, a chief gules.

1476.

43. ANDREW SCHERAR

(Council Reg., VI., 447).

1477.

41. ALEXANDER CHALMERS OF MURTHILL

(Council Reg., VI., 498).

Towards the close of this year of office, the Council were informed that James III. intended to send an embassy to the

* Miscell. Spalding Club, II., xci. † Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 67.

Duke of Burgundy on certain matters relating to trading privileges, and, ever alive to any interest which was "for the gude of merchants," they sent the Alderman and five worthy burgesses to Edinburgh to confer with the King's Council anent the matter.*

1478.

43. ANDREW SCHERAR

(Council Reg., VI., 550).

The Alderman during this year was called upon to defend the town's right in part of its freedom lands, for on 13th April, 1479, he was appointed Commissioner, with full power, to act for the town anent the dispute as to the lands of Tulloch, claimed by Andro Fresal [Fraser], laird of Staniewood.† This was the first of many actions of a similar nature which the Council were called upon to defend, notwithstanding the fact that their title was perfectly clear and at once respected when produced.

Within the year, also, the first reference occurs to a regular system of keeping the streets clean, as on 13th September Sande Coutts is promised a penny from every fire house to keep the "causais" clean. On the same day licence was granted to Alexander Trail, Thomas of Mar, and Thomas Scroggs to cast "a dok" and a large place for their ship within the haven anywhere it pleases them, so that they may keep their ship in safety.

Reference has already been made to the difficulty experienced in getting the accounts of the alderman properly rendered, and some such difficulty appears to have arisen in Scherar's case. By a minute dated 10th September, 1479, the Council agree to forgive him the sums resting in his hands on condition that he "big the beacons of the havin in al gudely and possibil haist," and that he also clear the haven within year and day of the wreck of the Spanish barge that lies beyond the water.‡

* Council Reg., VI., 544. † Ibid., VI., 589. ‡ Ibid., VI., 600.

1479.

41. ALEXANDER CHALMERS OF MURTHILL

(Council Reg., VI., 603).

Some difficulty seems to have taken place in connection with this election, as it was only completed on a precept under the Privy Seal.

1480.

44. ALEXANDER MENZIES

(Council Reg., VI., 651).

During the spring of 1481 a threatened war with England put the burgesses into a panic lest they should have a visit from the forces of "The Riever Edward, calling himself King of England," as the Scottish Estates designed Edward IV. in one of their legislative Acts. The Council therefore set about building a foss round the town, while measures were devised for the fast locking of the haven.

1481.

XLV. James Leslie

(Council Reg., VI., 697).

Kennedy designates this James Leslie as of "Wardhous," but in doing so he is evidently in error, as there was no James Leslie of that branch of the family at this time. The probability is that he was of the same Aberdeen family as David, whose name appears in the list of magistrates for 1475. This branch of the Leslies may have been descended from Sir Andrew Leslie, third baron of Balquhain.*

The building of the choir of the Parish Church of S. Nicholas was still being prosecuted—slowly, it is true, yet progress was being made—by means of contributions from the citizens and by

* Family of Leslie, III., 4.

certain dues levied on merchandise arriving at the port. Bishop Thomas Spens had also granted for the same purpose the second teinds of the bishopric, but his successor, Robert Blacater, did not see his way to continue this grant. This action on his part was very displeasing to the burgesses, and so by minute, dated 11th November of this year, they declare that Robert, Elect, [of Aberdeen] is to have no service either to himself or his factors, on account of his unfriendly withholding of the second teind.

1482.

XLVI. **Robert Blinseile**

(Council Reg., VI., 752).

This provost belonged to a family whose municipal record is a long and honourable one. Of the four baillies mentioned in 1392, one was William Blinseile, while in the list of common councilmen for 1435, there appear the names of his father Robert, and his uncle Thomas. His father also appears as one of the magistrates in October, 1442, his uncle in 1444, his cousin Alexander in 1451, and subsequently, and his cousin William in 1479, and at various subsequent dates. The Provost himself appears to have entered municipal life at an early age, and at Michaelmas, 1472, he was elected for the first time to the magistracy. In 1475, '77, and '79 this honour was repeated, and at Michaelmas, 1482, he was elected provost, an office which he occupied for a year, when he again became a councilman, and in this capacity his name appears in the lists of elected councillors for a long series of years.

In 1482 and the year following he was commissioner for the burgh in Parliament, and was chosen to serve on the Articles, while in 1486 he went into England in the suite of the Scottish ambassadors.*

Like so many of his townsmen who figure in this record,

* Stodart's Scottish Arms.

Blinseile was a merchant trading in the export of the staple commodities of the district, and receiving in return the merchandise of the Low Countries. It is in this capacity that we find him as one of the customers of Andrew Halyburton, the Conservator of Scotch trading privileges at Campvere. The Provost's account in the Ledger presents some interesting items, among which may be noted that his trade mark was three stars, two over one, and the exports sent for disposal in the Continental market were chiefly wool and salmon. Halyburton, it appears, was quite open to carry out little commissions for his customers of a different character to the usual trade transactions, as is shown by the credit allowed on one occasion for Blinseile's exports. The following is the entry from the Ledger:—

"Item in Januar, anno [14]99, send vp to Rom to Master Wyllzem Cuper for the exspedision of ij dispensacionis, an to Robert Blyndsellis dochter an othir for a frend of hys, ilk ducat cost 6s. 8g, som of the xl ducatis with the chans 13li 6s. 8g. off the quhilk I send hym ham his cowssyngis dispensacion the quhilk cost 15 ducatis som 5li. Item for the portag of the samyn fram Rom 3s."

It is difficult to say what the nature of these dispensations were, unless they were marriage dispensations, but the cost appears to have been considerable.

In the year of his provostship, Blinseile granted to the altar of the Virgin Mary within the parish church an annual rent of two merks from the lands of Pitmuxton and one merk from a tenement in town for the celebration of an obit for himself and his wife on the anniversaries of their death, and for the purchase of thirteen loaves and a quantity of good flesh for distribution among thirteen poor persons, who were likewise to receive a money payment of twopence each.* To the same charity he likewise bequeathed an annuity of 2s. from a tenement in the Green for providing a lamp to burn during the winter before the altar.

* Antiq. Abd. and Banff, III., 184-192.

On the 21st October, 1495, he executed a deed in favour of the chaplain of the altar of SS. Lawrence and Ninian, whereby he secured an annuity of 4s. to the said altar out of a tenement on the east side of the Gallowgate.* His latest gift is dated in 1504, in which he endowed the recently-built chapel on the Castle Hill, dedicated to S. Ninian, with his property on the west side of the Shiprow, for reasons which are stated at full length in the charter dated on the 2nd May of that year. From this deed we learn that the Provost was the son of Robert Blinseile, by his wife Elizabeth Rutherford, and that he had married Isabella Wood, by whom he had at least one son, Ninian, and two daughters. Of the daughters, Elizabeth was married to Sir Alexander Cumine of Culter, while Mary, the second daughter, married as her first husband William Duff, and afterwards, in 1479, Alexander Forbes of Pitsligo.†

Attached to the deed of gift to S. Ninian's Chapel is the seal of the Provost, which shows barry of six; on the second bar, two holly leaves paleways between as many mullets; on the fourth bar, a mullet between two martlets; on the fifth bar, a cross; the sixth bar fretty.

From the fact that Ninian Blinseile is spoken of in June, 1505, as proprietor of certain tenements in the Gallowgate, which had previously belonged to the Provost, it is conjectured that the latter had died previous to that date. A board with the arms of Blinseile hung in the Choir of S. Nicholas Church until the beginning of the present century, but it gave no clue as to the date of his death, the inscription below the arms being, "Robert Blinseile, Provost of Aberdeen, 1482."

* Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 208. † Dunean, Tourist, 217.

The chief municipal event during Blinseile's year of office was the obtaining a charter from James III. granting to the community, in return for gratuitous services rendered to him, freedom in time coming from all customs upon salmon caught in the rivers Dee and Don, excepting those taken by strangers or unfreemen.

1483.

XLVII. Sir John Rutherford of Edgvy and Tarland

(Council Reg., VI., 804).

This provost was in all probability a son of Andrew Rutherford by his spouse Margaret Menzies. His father was dead by 1467, and his mother subsequently married as her second husband William of Seton, for on the 30th July, 1467, Rutherford sets a tenement on the east side of the Gallowgate for three years for an annual rent of 40s. to his mother and her second husband. A second minute informs us that he was going abroad, and consequently he appoints his dearest "eme," Henry of Rutherford, to look after his lands and the "male [rent] of the Waterton til his cumyn hame."*

He was home again at least by 1475, when he presented a letter from the King, calling on the aldermen, baillies, and council to defend and uphold his right to a half net of the Raik fishing. Rutherford, unlike most of the others who had risen to the office of chief magistrate, does not appear to have been a member of the council till his election in this year as provost.

In 1485 he received a charter under the Great Seal of the lands of Eastoune and Tarlane in Cromar, the annual rent of which is stated at £20.† The former property of Eastoune he held for a short time only, as on the 23rd January, 1488-89, there is a charter in favour of Sir Alexander Gordon of Mydmar of

* Council Reg., V., 608. † Reg. Mag., Sig. II., 340.

these lands on a resignation by Rutherford. Tarland he continued to hold till 1495, when he sold it to Alexander Irvine of Drum.*

During the period of his provostship and afterwards, he represented the burgh in Parliament, and in 1513 he was one of the Commissioners who were allowed 40 merks for their expenses, which seems a moderate enough charge when we remember that the Commissioners on that occasion had ten horsemen in their train.

Rutherford gave in his adhesion to the powerful Gordon party, and on 8th December, 1490, he granted a bond of manrent, obliging himself "to be bundyne and stratlie oblis . . . in the stratast stile of obligatun til ane nobill and mychtie lorde Alexander Lord Gordon."†

Provost Rutherford was married to a daughter of Alexander Leslie, fifth baron of Balquhain, by his second wife, a daughter of Cuming of Culter, and the issue of the marriage appears to have been two sons and a daughter—Alexander, who married Margaret Collison; John, and Elizabeth.

The first mention in the Council Register of his name with the prefix "Sir" occurs on 13th November, 1482, and it was probably about that date that he received the honour of knighthood.

Sir John was still living in 1527, when he resigned his tack of the lands of Rubislaw in favour of his son Alexander, but he was dead by the autumn of the following year, as appears by a dispute which the two brothers had over the question of their father's tack of the same lands.

* Reg. Mag., Sig. II., 476. † Miscell. Spalding Club, IV., 186.

On the west wall of Collison's Aisle there is a carved stone with the inscription—Dns Johannes Rudrfurde de Tarlan de Prepositus de Abdn; and formerly below this was a stone with the date 1484 and the arms of the family, viz., a fess between three martlets in chief and three holly leaves banded in base. The stone with the arms carved upon it which is at present below the inscription is not that shewn in the cut on the preceding page, which is copied from Logan's MS.*

1484.

41. ALEXANDER CHALMERS OF MURTHILL

(Council Reg., VI., 878).

During the year, the Provost, along with several of the citizens, attended the King's army at the "oist" at Berwick, and the election at Michaelmas, 1485, was delayed in consequence of their absence. It is difficult to know what was the occasion for this particular levy, unless this was the army assembled for the capture of Dunbar Castle.

1485.

47. SIR JOHN RUTHERFORD OF TARLAND

(Council Reg., VI., 934).

The election, instead of taking place at Michaelmas, was not held till the 11th October, that being the first Monday after the return of Provost Chalmers from the "asseging" of Berwick.

1486.

44. ALEXANDER MENZIES

(Council Reg., VI., 969).

William Chalmer was received this year as Common Clerk, and was admitted to the office by a formal presentation of the key of the common "kist." Sometimes the office was conferred

* Chart. S. Nicholas, II., Plate 1.

by giving sasine of a sheet of writing paper. The election made at Michaelmas, 1486, had evidently not pleased all the burgesses, for it is clear that a feeling was spreading among those entitled to vote at the election that the office of provost had fallen into the hands of a clique, who intended to hold it in rotation. On the 30th of June the King wrote a letter to the Council on this subject, in which he says that he has been given to understand that in the past "ther has been gret vexacioun and tribule amangis you throu the chesin of your officiaris," and in the free dispensation of the Common Good. The letter proceeds to charge all, under the highest pain, to freely choose the officers of the burgh, and to elect only those who shall take care of the common profit and good of merchandise.*

1487.

47. Sir JOHN RUTHERFORD of Tarland

(Council Reg., VII., 33).

The election of Rutherford for another term was evidently too much for some of the burgesses, and a protest was lodged with the Privy Council and letters obtained at the instance of David Menzies, calling upon parties to debate the matter within the space of fifteen days. It was this action of Menzies which called for another letter from James, dated 5th November, and which was laid before the citizens at a meeting specially called for that purpose on the 13th of the same month.†

From the King's letter it is evident that Menzies protested on the ground that he, and not Sir John, was elected to the office, and that the latter held the provostship, not by the free choice of the community, but "be election of a feu simpill personis his kynnismen." A charge is also made against Rutherford that he "is a masterfull oppressour of the liegis, ande for his oppressione thar may nay mercheante live within the burgh." Sir John, however,

* Council Reg., VII., 26. † Ibid., VII., 34.

had the King's ear in this pretty quarrel, and James writes the Council that this opposition to "our louet fameliar servitour is richt displesand," seeing that his mind was and is that his servitor should have the office for the good rule and common profit of the burgh. The letter having been read, Sir John retired, and the meeting discussed the matter, and came to the unanimous opinion that Menzies had never power or commission from them to raise such a question, and that the charge of oppression was wholly unfounded.

Within his year of office Sir John had to mourn the loss of his patron, who was murdered in his flight from the field of Sauchieburn, 11th June, 1488.

1488.

XLVIII. **David Menzies, Younger**

(Council Reg., VII., 79).

The death of James III., or the influence of the Menzies family, or probably both, inclined the burgesses in favour of David Menzies, and he was accordingly elected at Michaelmas of this year. In the Council Register of this period there are no less than five members of the Menzies family with the christian name of David, which tends to make the identification of the respective persons rather difficult, but it is believed that the provost was a son of David Menzies of Pitfoddels, by his wife Elizabeth Irving. If this supposition is correct, his sister Joneta became tutrix to his daughter Agnes in 1469. The only item of interest recorded during this year was the arrival of Lord Forbes in the burgh for the purpose of enlisting the burgesses in a crusade against the murderers of the late king and the party who held the young prince in their power. That the sympathies of the burgesses might be fully worked upon, we are told that Lord Forbes carried the bloody shirt of James III. through the streets on the point of his lance. Beyond taking their oaths on

certain "artikilis and opinionis," regarding the necessity of something being done towards having the king's murder avenged, and that the "laws and justice" be ministered equally according to "the pleasance of Gode," the community do not appear to have further committed themselves.

1489-90.

47. Sir JOHN RUTHERFORD of Tarland

(Council Reg., VII., 141, 201).

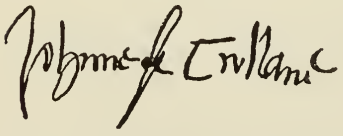
On the 30th January, 1490-1, Baillie Andrew Cullen asked openly in the Burgh Court if any person had reason to show or declare that Sir John Rutherford, alderman, or his brother Richard injured John Waus in his fishings, "nor did nay molestation trubull nor greyf to nay induellar of the said burghe vyer wais thane law and reson will."* It is needless to say no person appeared to make a complaint.

1491.

XLIX. **John Cullen**

(Council Reg., VII., 267).

From the Chronicle of Walter Cullen,† we learn that this provost was the eldest son of Robert Cullen, who at one time held the office of baillie. He had a brother named Andrew, and was served heir to his father on the 8th April, 1499. The surname is one which is frequently met with in local records at this date, and in this very year two of the four magistrates were members of this family—Andrew Cullen, elder and younger. A curious entry, the details of which we would like to have known, appears in the Register a few days before



* Council Reg., VII., 240. † Miscell. Spalding Club, II., 31.

the election, to the effect that "John of Culane or he be entered in the office of aldermanship to amende the offence done be him to the men of Danskin." Had the provost-elect driven too hard a bargain with the Low Country merchants, or treated them in a way which reflected on the hospitality of Bon-Accord? We cannot say, only this is plain that the alderman was required to be a man with a good record and worthy to uphold the position of such a commercial city as Aberdeen was even then, and so he is called upon to amend his fault before the honour of the burgh is entrusted to him. The Provost was himself a merchant dealing in the staple goods, and his name appears in Halyburton's Ledger as one of the Conservator's customers.

For his exports of wool and salmon he receives "thir stekis off gold," consisting of "13½ ald crounis, a ducat, three Hary nobillis, and an angell"—a truly miscellaneous collection.

The condition of the Common Good of the burgh was at this time in a most deplorable state, so much so that it was found impossible to pay the usual sums to the Exchequer, and on the 17th December Sir Stevin Lockart of Cleghorn arrived in the burgh with a summons for Provost Cullen, requiring that he should put himself in ward in Blackness Castle, near Linlithgow, within eight days, until the sum was paid. The balance of the hundred pounds required appears to have been forthcoming, as the Provost's name is on the sederunt of meetings held shortly after the date referred to.

The Provost was married, and had at least one son, David, his heir, and a daughter, who married Walter Brown, burgess.

The seal of his father, Baillie Robert Cullen, shows two boars' heads erased, over a cinquefoil, and are cut on one of the bosses of S. Mary's Chapel.

In Laing's Seals, John Cullan of Knavane (1517) is described

as bearing—on a bend between two boars' heads, couped, a cinquefoil inter two buckles, tongues erect.

1492.

47. Sir JOHN RUTHERFORD of Tarland

(Council Reg., VII., 346).

At the Michaelmas election Rutherford was chosen provost, but a minute of date 11th December informs us that he then resigned his office into the hands of Archibald, Earl of Angus, Chancellor, and that Alexander Reid was thereafter elected. It was about this date that James IV. paid his first visit to the city, and the probability is that Rutherford was too much a party man of the late King's faction to please Angus, and that his retirement from office was the direct act of the Chancellor.

1492-93.

L. Alexander Reid of Pitfoddels

(Council Reg., VII., 368, 465).

Alexander Reid was the eldest son of Andrew Reid, laird of Pitfoddels, and was admitted a burgess of guild on the 12th October, 1472. The other members of Andrew Reid's family appear to have been three sons and two daughters—John, Robert, Henry, Ada, married to ——— Kynnymund, and Katherine, married to Thomas Mar.

At this date the Reids had held Pitfoddels for over a century, the first laird being William, who obtained Wester Pitfoddels from his cousin, Alexander de Moravia of Culbyne, and whose grandson, Andrew, was the Provost's father.

In November, 1487, Reid, with consent of his brother Robert, who was then his heir, executed a charter in favour of his spouse, Mariote Cullen, granting her the lands of Wester

Pitfoddels for the whole term of her life. This charter was confirmed under the Great Seal on 16th January, 1487-8.*

By a charter, dated 10th December, 1494, the Provost and his spouse were jointly and severally infeft in Easter Pitfoddels, besides which they held the town and lands of Rubislaw on tack from the burgh.

His spouse, Mariote Cullen, having died, he married for his second wife Margaret Crawford, and on 4th November, 1504, he had a charter under the Great Seal confirming him and Margaret Crawford, his spouse, in the lands of Easterton and Westerton of Pitfoddels, with the salmon fishing on the Dee.†

Provost Reid died on the 27th February, 1506-7, and was survived by his widow, Margaret Crawford, and a daughter, Mariote, the only issue of his first marriage, who thus became heiress of Pitfoddels, and, by her marriage with Thomas Menzies, brought the estate into that family. Margaret Crawford, on 8th June, 1508, granted an annuity of 20s. out of land in the Castlegate for celebrating an obit for her husband at the altar of S. Christopher the Martyr on the Sunday after the 1st of March in each year.‡ An interesting memento of Provost Reid, in the shape of his portrait, hung in the session-house of S. Nicholas Church until the middle of the seventeenth century, but as it seems to have troubled the consciences of some of the covenanting leaders, it was removed. The minute in the kirk-session records is to the effect that on the 28th June, 1640, at a meeting of session—Dr. William Guild, moderator—"The session, understanding that some capitanes and gentilmen of the regiment of sojeris lying in this town had tein some offence at the portrat of umquhill Alexander Reid, sometyme of Petfoddels, as smelling somequhat of poperie, and standing above the session-hous door. For removeing of the quhilk offence ordanes the said portrat to be tein doun and not to be set up again."

The principal event during Reid's term of office was an

* Reg. Mag. Sig., II., 358. † Ibid., II., 596. ‡ Chart. S. Nicholas, II., 208, 210.

attempt to alienate a part of the town's heritage which had been in possession of the burgesses since the days of the Bruce. Sir Andrew Wood of Largo, during the reigns of James III. and IV., distinguished himself as Scotland's only admiral, both in defence of Scottish trading vessels and in offensive measures against English trade. James III., it was alleged by Wood, had given him, in recompense for services rendered to the Crown, a grant of the royal forest of Stocket, and of the Castlehill, within the burgh. This claim was the occasion of many troubled meetings of the Council, and on the 21st May, 1494, they commissioned the Provost, with other four, to appear before the Lords of Council and defend the town's heritage. In this the Commissioners were quite successful, for they took with them Robert I.'s charter and the Exchequer receipts for the annual feu-duty of the lands claimed. A decreet of the Lords was issued under the Great Seal on the 20th June, allowing the community to "broik and joiss the said burgh of Aberdene with the pertinentis as thai brokit of before." This decree was subsequently confirmed by James IV. by Letters under the Great Seal, 20th June, 1494.*

1494.

48. DAVID MENZIES, Younger

(Council Reg., VII., 567).

1495.

41. ALEXANDER CHALMERS of Murthill

(Council Reg., VII., 664).

On the 11th December of this year James IV. granted Letters under the Great Seal confirming the privilege of the burgh receiving one-half of the escheat of wool and skins passing out of the sheriffdom without paying the great custom. The original

* Council Reg., VII., 523, 534.

grant was made by James II. in 1458. On the same day the King, by a charter dated at Arbroath, constituted the town of Torry a free burgh of barony.

1496-1500.

47. Sir JOHN RUTHERFORD of Tarland

(Council Reg., VII., 755, 830, 902, 987, 1,070).

James in this year received the impostor Perkin Warbeck at Court, and undertook an expedition into England on his behalf, actions which seem to have greatly disturbed His Majesty's subjects in the northern parts of the kingdom. The reprisals by England took the form of a naval display, with orders to harass the coast towns. The possibility of a landing of our "ald inemeis of Ingland" had so impressed the minds of the Council that extraordinary precautions were taken for offering resistance should such actually occur.

The first measure taken was to hold a wapinschaw at the Cunninghavhill, at which all freemen of the burgh were ordered to attend, "welbodin and abilzeit for weir," with a spear or bow and "ane targe," under a penalty. A foss and wall were also directed to be built between the south haven (the Dee) and the north haven (the Don), together with a blockhouse of great strength at the Sandness, while every burgess was to bring into the burgh as many out-dwellers as he could possibly keep. Preparations were also made for having the fishers' boats always afloat, so that the people at Torry might be conveyed over to the burgh on the approach of danger. The burgesses, while allowed to go about their ordinary occupations, were to have their "targis and ale ther geir ready" whenever they should receive warning by the ringing of the common bell. The plan of defence arranged was that the burgesses were to keep under cover until the English had landed, unless it should seem expedient to the provost to do otherwise, and if the enemy should land to the north of the haven they were to be prepared to march for the

safety of the Cathedral Church, my lord of Aberdeen's palace, and the Canons' families and habitations.* Happily, however, these elaborate preparations were never tested, for James IV. had the good sense to see the folly of the task he had undertaken, and soon afterwards concluded a peace with England, and banished Warbeck from Scotland.

No sooner had one enemy been got rid of than another beset the poor burgesses in the shape of a visitation of the pestilence or plague, which broke out in the summer of 1498, and became so prevalent over the country in 1501 that Sir John, before setting out in that year to bring home lead for S. Nicholas Church from Berwick, thought it prudent to put his affairs in order, so "that his wyf and barnis be nocht skathit in tyme to cum."

Among other items of interest during Rutherford's five years of office, was the handing in of his accounts in July, 1498, some two months before the usual time, with a declaration that the Common Good was done, and a request that the Council might provide the necessary monies for themselves. This action was the result of a minute adopted at his election which provided that no super-expenditure was to be made nor the town drawn into debt, otherwise the alderman to answer for the same himself.† Sir John, it appears, ultimately provided the necessary funds himself, but, on demitting office in 1501, the auditors refused to give a deliverance on his intromissions.

On the 22nd August, 1498, it was decided by the commissioners of Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Perth, Dundee, and Haddington that a deputation of two burgess merchants of fashion, along with a cleric, should be sent to the Archduke of Austria regarding certain letters of marque issued by him, and also, if necessary, to get better terms for the import of staple goods. The burgesses of fashion chosen were the provosts of Edinburgh and Aberdeen, Sir Thomas Tod and Sir John Rutherford.

* Council Reg., VII., 820. † Ibid., VII., 755.

1501-3.

44. ALEXANDER MENZIES

(Council Reg., VIII., 9, 157, 261).

A case of slander against the Alderman was submitted to a special jury on the 28th April, 1503, when Robert Walcar, in the Gallowgate, was convicted of mis-personing Menzies by saying that there was never luck in his time, that he found the boll of meal at 4s., and he will leave it at 20s., with many other injurious and "perturbious lanage." The sentence of the Court, delivered on the 8th May following, was to the effect that Walcar should come into open Court forthwith, sit down on his knees and bespeak Menzies' forgiveness, after which he was to be banished the burgh during the will of the Alderman.*

1504.

LI. John Leslie of Wardis

(Council Reg., VIII., 376).

John Leslie, second baron of Wardis, was the son of Alexander Leslie by his spouse Isabella Lauder, and was born in 1460. He succeeded to the estate on his father's death in 1500. Alexander Leslie was admitted a burgess of the burgh in 1477, and the Alderman was only admitted in 1501, and does not appear to have held any office in the Council till his election as chief magistrate.

By resignation of his brother Walter he received on 14th February, 1500-1,† the lands of Balcomie in Fife, which had been his mother's marriage portion, and these lands he held up till 1512, when he exchanged them for others in the Garioch near his other property.‡ In recompense for certain moneys due to his father while acting as King's comptroller, Leslie received a charter constituting him baillie of all the King's lands of the

* Council Reg., VIII., 211-14. † Reg. Mag. Sig., II., 535. ‡ Ibid., II., 765.

regality of the Garioch. This grant was followed by another, dated 17th June, 1508, in which he received the feu farm of the thanage lands of Kintore, consisting of the over and nether davach of Kintore with the mill, Creichie, Tavilty, Mekil and Little Kynnaldy, Petmedden, and Nether Dyce, with the annual rents and fishing on the Don.

Provost John Leslie was married no less than five times, his first wife being Ann Stewart, a daughter of Alexander, Bishop of Moray, and grandson of James II. There were no children by this marriage, but by his second alliance with Margaret, a daughter of William, Lord Crichton of Frendraught, he had Alexander, his successor, and a daughter, Margaret, married to the laird of Cobairdy.

Before 1st March, 1501-2,* he had married for his third wife Agnes or Annabella, a daughter of Patrick Gordon of Haddo, by whom he had Andrew, progenitor of the Leslies of Bucharn and of the Leslies of Clisson, in France; Bessie, married to Robert Winton, and secondly to Andrew Menzies; Marjory, married to James Keith of Aquhorsk; and another daughter, married in 1520 to John Leith, a son of Leith of Edingarioch.

His fourth wife, to whom he was married before 20th January, 1524-5,† was Annabella Chalmers, a daughter of John Chalmers of Balbithan, by whom he had Robert, killed at the battle of Pinkie, 10th September, 1547; Clara, married to Patrick Leith of Harthill; Isabella, married to William Troup of Colmaleggie, and secondly to Andrew Craig of Balmellie; Annabella, married to Andrew Bremner, burgess of Aberdeen.

His fifth marriage was with Margaret Forbes,‡ a daughter of the laird of Echt, and relict of Walter Stewart of Dryland, by whom he had William, first of Warthill, and Walter, who died without issue.

Provost Leslie died on the 1st April, 1546, and was succeeded in his estates by his son Alexander.

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* Council Reg., VIII., 76. † Reg. Mag. Sig., III., 66. ‡ Ibid., III., 123.

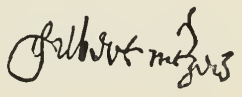
1505.

LII. Gilbert Menzies of Findon

(Council Reg., VIII., 499).

Gilbert Menzies, better known by his sobriquet of "Banison Gib," was the eldest son of David Menzies, by his wife, Margaret Fotheringham, a daughter of the laird of Powrie. He was served heir to his father in the various properties which he held in October, 1508. Provost Menzies, while proprietor of Findon, did not obtain the superiority right of the lands, which were formerly known as Auchinvyok and Arnabo, till 11th January, 1539-40, when he had a charter granted him on the resignation of the former proprietor, John Vaus of Many.

Another property held by the Provost was that of Futhesmoir, to the extent of "twa pleuis," and a third part of the town and lands of Futhesbeg. These lands, of the value of £30 8s. 7d., were granted to him by charter dated 2nd November, 1531, at the cost of the Lord Forbes, who, in July, 1521, had spoiled certain goods belonging to the Provost at Gilcomston.* Menzies, besides these lands, held others in tack, such as Gilcomston, and the larger property in the parish of Maryculter, belonging to the Knights of S. John. By charter, dated 15th December, 1535, he acquired an absolute right from Sir Walter Lindsay, Lord S. John, Preceptor of Torphichen, with the special licence and consent of the Master of the Hospital of S. John of Jerusalem, in these lands, consisting of Blairs, Estland, Tuliskeith, and Estir Tilboury, together with the Mill of Maryculter. This grant was subsequently confirmed by a charter under the Great Seal, dated 2nd June, 1542.† As already noticed, the Menzies family had acquired considerable hold over the lands of Pitfoddels, upon which they had several wadsets, and it seems to have been



* Reg. Mag. Sig., III., 237. † Ibid., III., 619.

an object with them to get the whole property into the family.

An opportunity to effect this occurred in the Provost's lifetime, and he does not appear to have been slow in availing himself of it. Provost Alexander Reid (50), of Pitfoddels, left an only daughter, who thus became his heiress, and it seems to have been agreed between Menzies and Reid that Mariote, or Marion, the daughter of the latter, should wed Thomas, the son and heir of Gilbert, so that in them the whole property might become united. After Reid's death, his widow, Margaret Crawford, did her best to thwart Menzies in the carrying out of the alleged arrangement, and considerable litigation took place in the local courts over the custody of her step-daughter, Marion Reid, who was at the time a minor. Menzies, however, appears to have got his way in the dispute, for he produced the King's letters in his favour, granting him the ward and marriage of the young heiress, and after having his right fully acknowledged he allowed the relict of Provost Reid to keep her step-daughter on finding sufficient caution.

Gilbert Menzies was married to Marjory Chalmers, a daughter of Provost Alexander Chalmers (41), and by her he had the following family:—Thomas, his heir, Alexander, Andrew, David, John, Gilbert, and a daughter, married to John Dempster of Auchterless. He died on the 27th September, 1543, and was survived by his wife, who, according to the same authority—"The Chronicle of Aberdeen"*—"departtit the saxt day of Februar, the yeir of God 1553[-4] yeiris."

On the 17th November, 1505, Hector Boece, the principal of the newly-established college in Old Aberdeen, was presented to the altarage of S. Ninian, in the parish church. On the 27th January following, Sir John Rutherford, who evidently held the right of patronage, resigned his right in favour of the town, and was rewarded with "gret thanks" and the remission of all claims against him.†

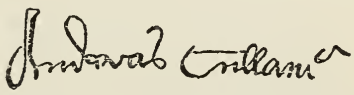
* Miscell. Spalding Club, II., 33. † Council Reg., VIII., 520, 542.

1506.

LIII. Andrew Cullen

(Council Reg., VIII., 607).

Provost Cullen was the second son of Baillie Robert Cullen and a brother of Provost John Cullen (49). The calling of the Provost, like that of the majority of his fellow-burgesses of distinction, was that of a merchant, and from Halyburton's Ledger we learn that he carried on a pretty considerable trade with the Low Countries. His exports were chiefly wool and salmon, the staple articles of export at that period, and in return he received such commodities as "gyngar, pipper, cloys, massis, fin ssucur, saip, venykar, madir, allom, blak bonetis, a rym off peper, fostian and gren chamlet," &c. The returns, however, on some occasions were not quite so large as they might have been, for the careful Conservator has taken pains to explain the low price obtained for some of the salmon by adding in the ledger that they were "something lopy," *i.e.*, soft. Andrew Cullen was married, but to whom we have not been able to discover, and had at least two sons, who have also left their mark on the page of local history. The elder son, Walter (died 28th October, 1561), became one of the magistrates in 1531, and by his wife, Bessie Prat, had two sons—Robert, who fell at the battle of Pinkie, and Walter, who was for some time Reader of the Kirk of S. Nicholas, and author of "The Chronicle of Aberdeen." The younger son of the Provost was called Andrew, and, from being parson of Fetterneir, he died vicar of S. Nicholas Church on 7th July, 1560, and was succeeded in that office by his nephew Walter. Provost Cullen, on the authority of his grandson, departed this life on the 27th day of January, 1542-3.



In the old Church of S. Nicholas* there was up to the

* Chart. S. Nicholas, II., Plate 2, Fig. 3.

beginning of the present century a monument to Provost Cullen, but it has since disappeared except the part bearing the inscription. This stone is now built into the north wall of Collison's Aisle, under a sculptured coat of arms, with which it has no connection, and reads, ANDREAS CVLLEN PREPOSITUS ABD. The arms carved on the monumental stone, which has disappeared, were three holly leaves banded in base between two boars' heads erased in chief, and a rose in base, but were not those, however, which the Provost used on his seal in his capacity as baillie, the device on it being not unlike that used by him for his trade dealings.

It was during Cullen's term of office that the title of provost came into general use in the minutes of Council.

1507-13.

52. GILBERT MENZIES OF FINDON

(Council Reg., VIII., 746, 1,010, 1,116; *IX.*, 26, 135, 260).

The Act of 1469, ordaining that the officers of the burgh should be elected for one year, "and nae langer," was now practically a dead letter, for although a form of election was gone through, it was not one of free choice by a majority of the burgesses. One of the first acts of Menzies' second term of office was the framing of a most complete code of municipal regulations, which, on 8th October, 1507,* were sanctioned by the Council "for the comone proffit weill and gud reull" of the burgh. The nature of these regulations may be gathered from the following:—"That nay merchant oppin his butht dur to sel or buy, or do ony merchandise one ane Sunday" under pain of a fine of wax to the "Holyblud licht." Foot chapmen bearing packs were to have freedom to come and go as they pleased, while forestallers of the markets were beset with pains and

* Council Reg., VIII., 753.

penalties on every side, so that the unlawful trade might be kept down. The regulations made for the protection and comfort of the community are, however, the more interesting, as, for example, it is ordained that no swine should be without a ring in their "wort," or, after the expiry of fifteen days, they might be slain wherever found. Candlemakers were to have candle always ready to sell to all men, "small weikit and dry"; baxters to have bread sufficient, "gud and clene stuf, penny bread and twa penny bread"; while craftsmen's wives, litstars, cordwainers, &c., who were in the habit of brewing ale are ordained to have a "leid" to brew in, and another for the purposes of their craft. Persons affected with the "strange seiknes of nappillis" [Naples] are to be kept by themselves "for the sawetie of the town," a cleansing staff is organised to "cleng the toun and dicht the causaies," while "na muk" is to lie at "ony mannis yit or dur" longer than twenty-four hours under pain of 8s., and the "muk" to be free to every person who shall "pless to tak or leid it away." These regulations are exceedingly interesting from the light they shed on the manners and social comforts of the burgesses four centuries ago.

The old festivals of S. Nicholas Day and Candlemas, with their processions of Robin Hood and Little John at the former, and the crafts in their allegorical pageants at the latter occasion, had apparently fallen away from the splendour of the early representations, but during Menzies' term special Acts of Council were passed for holding these high days in their accustomed fulness, according to the "ald lovabile consuetud and ryt of the burgh."

It was perhaps the resuscitating of these festivities which was accountable for the pomp and magnificence of the reception accorded to Margaret, Queen of James IV., on the occasion of her visiting the burgh in May, 1511. The reception, which has been graphically described to us by the poet Dunbar, who was an eye-witness of the ceremony, appears to have fully sustained the

boast of the burgesses that they were not only entitled, but able, to receive the Queen "als honorablie as ony burgh of Scotland, except Edinburgh allanerlie." The Queen, escorted by a body of the burgesses in their best array, was welcomed to the burgh by the whole community, while "fair processions in caps of gold and silk" and pageants innumerable thronged every street through which she had to pass. A costly cup with two hundred pounds was the propine, or gift, which the loyal burgesses presented to their Queen from an exchequer which had to be bolstered up with a fictitious credit so that the necessary funds might be obtained. The recompense, if such it could be called, was the issue of Letters under the Great Seal on 17th August following, confirming the grants made in 1495, and extending the like privileges to the purchase and sale of victual. Five months later, viz., on 28th January, 1511-12, James also confirmed a Decreet Arbitral of the Lords of Council assigning to the provost and baillies full jurisdiction for offences committed by burgesses and freemen, but this right of "bludewith" was a privilege for which the community had to pay in current money of the realm.

During the last year of office the provost and council were busy in repairing the old defences of the town and devising new measures of safety, as war had again been declared, and a visitation from their old enemies of England was looked for by the community almost as a certainty. Gunpowder, artillery, spears, and such warlike stores were bought and laid up for emergencies, while trenches were dug at various points, and a regular watch was set for the twenty-four hours, every burgess and freeman being bound to take his turn or find a substitute. In addition to bearing the not inconsiderable expenses of providing defences for the burgh, the burgesses had to furnish their quota of volunteers for the king's army, and at the battle of Flodden, which proved so disastrous to the arms of Scotland, the burgh had twenty spearmen and six horsemen present.

1514-15.

LIV. **John Mar**

(Council Reg., IX., 369, 494).

John Mar was one of three sons of John Mar, burgess. His brothers, David and Alexander, also took some interest in municipal life, the name of the former appearing in the list of magistrates for some years previous to this date.

Provost Mar was married to Jonete Ogston, and had issue two sons, Alexander, his heir, and John; and it would appear that the Provost was dead by November, 1527, as in that month a half-net's fishing of the Raik was let to Alexander Mar, the "son and ayr" of vmquhile John Mar, Provost.* In 1552 his son John, who was then one of the magistrates, was entered in Kingshill, and a half-net of the Raik and Stell fishings in Dee.†

The municipal laws were at this time enforced with great rigour, and many amusing cases are found recorded in the Council Register of punishments inflicted for breaches of these regulations. A conviction during Mar's term of office is recorded against the common bellman for advertising the sale of oysters at fourpence the hundred, when the exposers had purchased them from a boat in the harbour at threepence. The punishment inflicted on the unfortunate bellman was that he should have his neck put in the goifs and ask pardon of the town for his offence.

During 1513-15 the burgh was again subjected to the ravages of the plague, and more than ordinary precautions seem to have been taken to lessen the dreadful effects of the malady. Three ports only were to be opened, and at each of these two worthy burgesses were stationed for the purpose of taking note of all persons entering the burgh, while those infected with the disease or likely to have caught it were removed to the "Lodges"

* Council Reg., XII., 287. † Titles of Countesswells.

erected at the Links and Gallowhills outside the burgh. These unfortunates were ordained to remain there for forty days after they were healed, and to stay for a like period within their houses thereafter before being certified or licensed to pass to kirk or market. Attempts were often made to break or evade these stringent measures, and in 1515 no fewer than sixteen persons were banished from the burgh for a year and a day for disobeying the "orders anent the plague."

The alarm which spread over Scotland on the news of Flodden appears to have been very great, and a reflection of it can easily be seen from the nature of the entries in the Council Register. The artillery and weapons belonging to the burgh were overhauled, three masters of artillery were appointed, and watchers set, two at the bell-house beyond the water at Torry, and two at the Castlehill. These precautions, however, do not appear to have met the emergencies of the time, and so a regular watch of eight men was appointed, four of whom were stationed at S. Fittick's beyond the water, and four at the Cunningarhill, ready with materials to make a blaze to warn the town on the approach of danger.

In addition to these alarms, quarrels had arisen within the country, and had assumed a serious character through the death of James IV. and the consequent Regency of Albany. One of the most powerful of the Regent's enemies ranged on the Angus side was Lord Home, the only man of distinction who escaped from the fatal field of Flodden. During a visit to Edinburgh, Home and his brother were seized by the Regent's authority, tried, and executed, the trial being more a form than a reality, as it was "said that the foreigners surrounding Albany were the real agents in the affair." The truth of this appears to be borne out by the measures taken by the Regent to support his authority by obtaining the consent of the various burghal communities; for on 10th January, 1515-16, the Provost was authorised to take the common seal to the Monthe to seal the process of forfeiture of Alexander, Lord Home.

Throughout all these troubles, and at considerable cost, the new choir of S. Nicholas Church was being slowly completed, and Provost Mar, during his two years' tenure of office, had the satisfaction of seeing the ceiling of the new building finished. On the north inner wall of the old East Church the following inscription ran in one line along the margin of the ceiling:—"Ad Laudem Divi Nicholai In Anno Prepositure Honorabilis viri Johannis Mar hoc celamen factum fuit tempore Patrici Leslie Magistri fabrice hujus ecclesie Anno MCCCCCXV."—In honour of S. Nicholas, in the year of the provostship of an honourable man, John Mar, this ceiling was made, Patrick Leslie being Master of the work of this church, Anno 1515. In addition to the inscription there was placed above it a shield with the Provost's arms, a chevron, between two boars' heads in chief, and a heart in base.

1516-20.

52. GILBERT MENZIES of Findon

(Council Reg., IX., 618, 752; *X.*, 1, 119, 234).

During 1519, the Earl of Huntly, evidently in virtue of the bond of man-rent granted by the Council to his family in 1463, called on the burgesses to help him in the siege of the House of Dunrobin, in Sutherlandshire. The Council were evidently unwilling to undertake any such expedition, and the composition paid by the community for licence to remain at home was the loan to Huntly of three of the best pieces of artillery, with stones, leads, and powder.

The difficulty of meeting the costs of management of the burgh is again forcibly brought to our notice in the following year, when Lord Erskine obtained Letters from the King against

the provost and baillies, ordering them to enter their persons in ward within the Castle of Blackness for non-payment of the pension of a hundred pounds, which had been assigned to him out of the burgh's yearly payment to Exchequer.

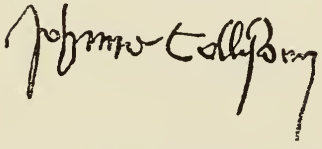
About this time a series of disturbances took place between the burgh and several of the landward barons, which were the cause of no little trouble and expense to the burgesses. Shortly before Menzies demitted office on this occasion he was authorised by the Council to complain against John Lord Forbes, his son, and accomplices, for their "oppression and cruel spulzie done to the fishings and freedoms of the same." The complaint was to be made to the King, Regent and Council, and redress obtained at their hands. It was evidently not Menzies' intention to retire from office at Michaelmas, 1521, but on receipt of a letter from the Privy Council, the provost, two baillies, and four officers resigned their respective offices so that the burgesses might have a new election. Previous to his retirement Provost Gilbert obtained the consent of the Council to take part of the town's artillery and a supply of powder from the chapel on the hill (S. Ninian's, on the Castlehill) for the purpose of defending himself, his lands, and goods.

1521.

LV. John Collison

(Council Reg., X., 351).

This provost was the son of John Collison, burgess, by his wife Agnes Fichet, a daughter in all probability of Provost Mathew Fichet (34). The other members of the family to whom occasional reference is made are David, Alexander, and Margaret. Collison married Elizabeth Leslie, only daughter of Alexander Leslie, first baron of Wardis, and the widow of William Seton of Meldrum. The issue of this marriage



was, so far as known, a son, John, who married Margaret Seton, and a daughter, married to a brother of the laird of Drum. On the 12th May, 1489, he granted an annual rent of 20s. out of his lands of the Lochfields to the Prior and Convent of the Carmelites in Aberdeen for the purpose of celebrating a perpetual obit in memory of his mother, Agnes Fichet, and his brother David.* Besides the Lochfields he held several half-nets fishing on the Dee, part of which was acquired from James Bonar of Rossy by charter under the Great Seal, dated 7th February, 1480-1. Provost Collison is best remembered, however, by the part he played in an attack made on the burgh by certain of the Garioch lairds on the 2nd October, 1525.

The cause of this raid is generally said to have been occasioned by some affront put on the Leslies by the town, whereas there can be little doubt that the dispute arose in connection with that ever-recurring question as to the right of election of the provost and other officers of the burgh. That this was the root of the quarrel is made perfectly clear from several entries made in the "Buk of Statutis" about this time. The earliest of these statutes is dated on 26th May, 1525, and is to the effect that "the haill body of the guid toune" are resolved to uphold their right of free election as it had been handed down to them "this mony yeires bygane past memorie of man," notwithstanding that they have been divers and "money tymes invadit both be lordis and gentilmen in the contreth" seeking to have the superiority of the town by way of election of the provost. This power, the narrative proceeds to say, was intended to subdue the "haill" community to these gentlemen and their houses, "fir quhair the heid is outrune the membeirs may nocht guidley resist." On the present occasion, however, the burgesses resolved that no gentlemen to landward, nor any person who does not scot lot and ward, should have any vote, nor come within the Tolbooth to stop the free election of the burgesses entitled to vote.

* Reg. Epis. Abd., II., 301.

Commission was likewise given to the provost and baillies to keep and defend the Tolbooth during the progress of the election, and to allow no one to pass who was not qualified to vote. Such was the statute, and when, in accordance with the "old lovable consuetude" of the burgh, it was submitted to the burgesses for ratification on the last day of September we learn that it was approved of by the whole town, "na maner of persone small nor gryt in na degree opponand nor sayand in the contrar except Johne Collisone elder and certain of his complices to the number of quhilkis opponit and said that gentill men of landuart sic as the lairdis of Drum, Wardes, Balquhyne, and Meldrum suld have thair wottis."

The election took place on the 2nd October, and on the night between the first and second a furious attack was made on the burgh by Alexander Seton of Meldrum, John Leslie of Wardis, William Leslie of Balquhain, Alexander Leslie of that ilk, with their servants, to the number of eighty spears. The fight appears to have been a rather serious affair, for, although the burgesses were able to defeat their assailants, it was at the cost of a considerable part of their number being killed and wounded. By a minute of Council, dated the same day as the attack, authorising certain monies to be raised by prolonging the tacks of the lands and fishings, it was specially provided that they were not to be set "to nae maner of person quhilks wes art or part of the cruell murther, slauchter, mutilatoun, and hurting of their nychtbours" made upon them by solicitation of John Collison, elder, and his party. The whole blame of this camisade is rightfully attributed to Collison, as it was to his connection and influence with Seton, his step-son, and Leslie of Wardis, his brother-in-law, that such an attack was possible.

In the "Buk of Statutis" already referred to there is a note in a different handwriting alongside the statute of May, 1527, which sums up the character of Provost Collison in these words:—"Ane ambesowus proud man was this John Colesoun." Notwithstanding the injury which he had done the town, he

appears to have regained the confidence of the burgesses to some extent, as he was one of the Commissioners for the burgh to the Parliament held in 1532. The exact date of his death is not known, but it must have taken place prior to 27th February, 1534-5, when his son John, in selling an annual rent of 20s. to Sir William Coupar, chaplain, describes himself as son and heir of the late John Collison. Provost Collison was interred in the north aisle of S. Nicholas Church, then known as the Aisle of the Holy Blood, but after the Reformation, from the fact that it was the burying-place of the family, it came to be known as Collison's Aisle. The rounded arch below the north window has always been pointed out as the site of the Collison tomb, and in the recess there formerly lay the stone effigies of the Provost and his lady. The recess is presently occupied by the effigy of Alderman Robert Davidson (22), while the effigies of Provost Collison and Elizabeth Leslie lie on the sill of a window in the West Church.

Arthur Johnston has written an epigram on the tomb of Provost Collison, in which, describing a fitting statue to adorn it, he furnishes the following inscription:—

> "Vir saeclo, Saturne, tuo Lacedæmone civis,
> Romulea Consul dignus hic urbe fuit."
>
> "A man he was worthy of Saturn's golden age; a citizen like Lacedæmon's; a consul [magistrate] worthy of the city of Romulus."*

1522-24.

52. GILBERT MENZIES of Findon

(Council Reg., XI., 175, 353, 478).

The Provost's attention during this tenure of the chair was occupied chiefly with endeavours to check the progress made by the new Evangel. On the 7th of August, 1525, the King addressed a letter to Sir John Rutherford and Thomas Menzies

* Musa Latina Abd., II., 78.

of Pitfoddels in which he states that on information supplied by Gavin, Bishop of Aberdeen, it is believed that sundry strangers and others "has bukis of that heretik Luthyr," and favour his errors and false opinions. The letter, which was accompanied by a copy of the Act of Parliament lately passed against Luther's books, ordains the sheriffs, already named, to publish the Act, and to take inquisition of any who are known to have the proscribed books. From the fact that Aberdeen was at this time more in touch with the Continent than any other port in Scotland is to be attributed the rapid spread of the doctrines of Luther within the burgh.

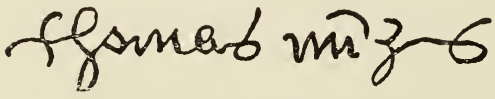
In this same year also (1525) we have the first record of a riding of the marches of the town's Freedom Lands, when, on 3rd May, being Holy Cross Day, the provost, along with the community, perambulated the march of the lands granted to the burgh by Robert I. under the charter of 1319.

1525.

LVI. Thomas Menzies of Pitfoddels

(Council Reg., XI., 626).

Provost Thomas Menzies was the eldest son of Provost Gilbert Menzies of Findon (52) by his wife, Marjory Chalmers. His influence for over half a century in all local matters, as well as the active part he took in national affairs, mark him out as a man of more than ordinary parts. The arrangements as to his marriage with the heiress of Pitfoddels have already been noticed, and when that event took place on the 12th January, 1520-1,* the Provost entered upon Pitfoddels as an unencumbered heritage, and one which was to be the designation of his family for the next three



* Miscell. Spalding Club, II., 31.

centuries. By his first wife, Marion Reid, Provost Thomas Menzies appears to have had a large family, of whom the following have been identified—Gilbert, born 10th June, 1522, and admitted a burgess of Guild, 11th October, 1537; Mr. Thomas, admitted a burgess 26th June, 1548; Robert, admitted 19th August, 1552; Alexander, witnesses a charter in favour of Alexander Fraser of Philorth, 14th January, 1552-3; William, the fifth son, born 7th February, 1532-3; Katherine, married first to Alexander Forbes of Pitsligo, by whom she had issue, and second to Mr. George Johnston, Dean of Guild, by whom she had also issue, understood to have been progenitors of the Johnstons of Middle Disblair, she died in May, 1599; Agnes, married to Thomas Nicolson, baillie; Christian, married, as his second wife to John Leslie, eighth baron of Balquhain; and Violet, married to Andrew Leslie, first Goodman of Bucharn. The "Chronicle of Aberdeen," under date 20th September, 1551, records that, after a wedded life of twenty-nine years, "Marione Reid, spouse to Thomas Menzies, prouest of Aberdeen, departitt" this life. From the same source we learn that Menzies took for his second wife Elizabeth Forbes, by whom he was survived. Provost Menzies died in December, 1576, while the following entry records the death of his second wife—"Elisabetht Forbes, Lady Towe, and spouse to Thomas Menzies of Pitfoddellis, and prouest of Aberdeen, departtit the xxij. day Januar,1584-[85]yeris." Built into the west wall of Collison's Aisle there is a well-preserved stone, consisting of two panels, the first under a knight's helmet, containing a shield bearing the Menzies arms—ermine, a

chief (gules), flanked by the initials T. M. The second panel has the initials M. R., and on a shield the Menzies' arms impaled with those of the Reids of Pitfoddels, viz., quarterly first and fourth [Reid], a chevron between two mullets in chief, and a cross crosslet fitché in base; second and third [Stewart], a fess checky.

The latter shield is surmounted by a dove for a crest, with the motto, NIHIL AMANTE DVRVM—Nothing is hard for one who loves. On the upper ledge of the stone there is cut the following—M.R.S., IVS, DEO, and on the ledge forming the base, SPERA IN DEO ET IPSE FACIET—Trust in God and he will perform. This stone was evidently part of some tomb erected within the church, most probably, from the arms upon it, on the occasion of Marion Reid's death in 1551.

Provost Menzies, previous to his marriage with Marion Reid, had a charter, dated 1st May, 1517,* granting him the lands of Middletown of Pitfoddels, along with the Easterton and Westerton and the fishing on the water of Dee, on the joint resignation of his father, Gilbert, and his affianced wife, Marion Reid, with consent of John Mar, her curator. This charter also constituted and erected the lands into one free barony, with the Middletown as the principal messuage, and the destination of the lands was to be in favour of the issue of the forthcoming marriage, whom failing to the heirs of Thomas. The grant of erection into a free barony was renewed and confirmed by a second charter under the Great Seal, dated 5th November, 1543.† Menzies was on several occasions chosen to represent the burgh in Parliament, and among other offices which he held we find him, in 1543, and for several years afterwards, holding the post of Comptroller of the Royal Household, while in 1538 he acted as Mareschal Depute of Scotland.

His election as provost, which took place immediately after the raid of the Garioch lairds, called forth his administrative

* Reg. Mag., Sig. III., 33. † Ibid., III., 658.

powers at once, and we find him accordingly devising measures for ensuring that the burgesses should not be again taken unawares. A Head Court was held four days after the election, when warrant was given to the Master of the Kirkwork to hand over all the "stanis, tymmer, and lyme" under his charge, so that the ports, vennals, and back dikes might be built up and repaired. A watch was likewise placed in the steeples of the church and Tolbooth, with instructions to ring the bell whenever they saw any persons riding towards the town, while additional "gunnars" were hired, and a general order issued for all young and able men to furnish themselves with culverins, hand-bows, spears, and other weapons of defence. These precautions show how a second visitation like that of the 2nd October was dreaded on the part of the citizens.

In April of 1526 the burgh had a visit for the first time from James V., and, according to ancient custom, he received a propine of wine, wax, &c., while other members of the Court also received gifts of wine, for although money was excessively scarce, the provost and Council were resolved that "the guyd nayme and honour of this guyd toune, wone be ther noble progenitors, decad nocht in thair tyme."

1526-32.

52. GILBERT MENZIES of Findon

(Council Reg., XII., 43, &c.).

Some months previous to taking office for his fifth term, Walter Cullen records that the provost's house was the scene of a tragedy, when on the 30th January, 1525-6, Alexander Seton of Meldrum was slain by John, Master of Forbes. The house which witnessed the bloody deed took fire and became a complete wreck on the 24th August, 1529, and in its place there was erected one of the first private residences in the burgh built of stone. This house, long known as Pitfoddels' Lodgings, occupied the site where the Union Bank now stands in Castle

Street, and was taken down in 1766 when the present building was erected. Gilbert's son, Thomas, who had succeeded to this building after his father's death, was told to his face in 1545 that he "was not feared, no, not for all his power or his stane house," which plainly shows that at this period the house must have held a unique position among the buildings of its day. About 1526 an arrangement was entered into with Lord Forbes whereby the town became bound to give his lordship a tun of wine yearly, in return for which he promised protection to the town's fishings upon Dee and Don. The Council, however, were not long in discovering that, instead of protecting the salmon fishings during the close season, "they who should be keepers are principal destroyers and fishers of the waters in undue time," and they resolved in consequence to discontinue the present of wine. This action called forth a protest from Lord Forbes, and on the 20th May, 1530, a letter was despatched to him in name of the provost and Council to the effect that the town was still willing to implement the bargain on their part if he was sincere in wishing to fulfil his share in the contract. The agreement so far appears to have been verbal, but the provost writes for his lordship's bond under his seal and subscription to cause the black fish to be kept in undue time, and punish the slayers, and, in return, he shall have their bond and his wine as before. To a further claim made by Lord Forbes to a half-net's fishing, the Council were not so pliant, for they wrote as follows:—"My lord, in good faith we know not that ever your lordship had any title or right thereto, and as for us, we are o'er small men to hold anything from your lordship ye have right to. And for us, we will never give you anything for any title or right your lordship has to any waters among us, and where you desire us to be kind to your lordship, as ye have been to us in time bygone, we thank you of kindness bygone, and pray your lordship to persevere in time coming." This answer was not to Forbes's liking, and so, on the 30th July following, an attack was made upon the burgh by several of his lordship's clan, prominent among whom were

Forbes of Pitsligo and Arthur Forbes of Brux. The invaders, however, received a warm reception, for the citizens expected them, and the day previous to the attack a meeting of the Council was held, at which certain precautions were taken for defending the burgh "gif it suld hapyn the Lord Forbes or his friendis to cum to the said tovn." Coming in through the Gallowgate port, the assailants were driven, after some severe fighting, into the Greyfriars' Convent, where they were besieged for twenty-four hours, after which they were allowed to depart, minus their horses, &c. The result of this outbreak was an appeal to the law by both parties for redress, and, on 17th August, the Provost, his four sons, and nineteen of the inhabitants were tried at Linlithgow before Robert Barton of Overbarton, Justiciar, on a charge of forethought felony on Alexander Forbes, the son and heir of the laird of Brux.

The counts of the indictment were to the effect that the persons charged convocated the King's lieges to the number of 500, and drove him to the Greyfriars' Place on Sunday, the penult day of July, when he happened to be in town with only five persons, and besieging him for twenty-four hours. Also, for being art and part in the cruel slaying of his servant, demembration and mutilation of his finger, of cutting William Forbes' arm and two fingers, and robbery of horses. The verdict of the jury was an acquittal of Menzies and his fellow-burgesses; and the Forbeses, worsted on both occasions, soon found it to their advantage to again renew the friendly dealings with the burgesses which had previously existed.*

During Menzies' term of office he had the pleasure of conveying the thanks of the burgh to Bishop Gavin Dunbar for the great pleasure and profit done to the community by building the Bridge of Dee, and their further thanks for his great offer and promises for upholding the bridge after its completion, notwithstanding the fact that the bridge had been wholly "founded,

* Council Reg., XII., 817, 875.

biggit, and ended on his lordship's great, high, and exorbitant expences."

The office of provost was fast becoming a monopoly, in which the various members of the Menzies family appear to have undertaken the management of the burgh as a right pertaining to the family. On the 2nd October, 1531, at the Head Court of the citizens, Provost Gilbert appeared and required the town to admit and obey his son Thomas in all actions concerning the provostship and "weel" of the town during his absence, which was agreed to, although Thomas was not even one of the four baillies that year.*

1533-34.

56. THOMAS MENZIES of Pitfoddels

(Council Reg., XIV., 269, 447).

A curious case of slander and mispersoning the baillies and officials is recorded about this time, in which the defaulter was one John Singour, who was ordered to come on Sunday and pass openly before the Passion so far as it goes "sarklane," bareheaded and barefooted, with the getward staff and knife in the one hand, and a wax candle of four pounds' weight in the other, and thereafter ask forgiveness of the baillies and deliver the staff and knife to be hung up in the Tolbooth in a chain of iron in perpetual remembrance of his fault.

1535.

53. ANDREW CULLEN

(Council Reg., XV., 5).

The principal event during Cullen's year of office was the sending of the Tolbooth clock to Flanders to get repaired—a small matter truly, but yet one of pressing importance to the burgh when watches were not so common as now. The Council,

* Council Reg., XIII., 223.

some time before this, had agreed with William Wallace to "row, set, guide, and keep" the clock for a yearly salary of four merks, to be raised from the rent of the booths under the Tolbooth; and when the clock went wrong he undertook to make her as sufficient as any man in Scotland, the Council agreeing to pay 20s. when "she is mended and strikes as she should do." Wallace had not, evidently, fulfilled his boast, or the clock was too far gone to be repaired, for, in sending her to Flanders, instructions were given that if she would not repair, a new clock was to be obtained on the town's charges.*

1536.

52. GILBERT MENZIES OF FINDON

(Council Reg., XV., 215).

This was the last year in which Gilbert Menzies held the office of provost, he having occupied the chair for a quarter of a century between 1505 and this date.

The only items of interest during this year was the granting of a charter of incorporation to the now extinct society of "barbors," and the passing of regulations to prevent the spread of the plague.

1537-44.

56. THOMAS MENZIES OF PITFODDELS

(Council Reg., XV., 412, &c.).

About the date of his election Menzies had to provide entertainment for James V., who visited the burgh on his way home from S. Duthac's of Tain, where he had been on pilgrimage. His stay was marked by the grant of the usual propine of wine, wax, and "scorcheats."

During 1535, Baillie Henry Irvine, with some of his colleagues, raised summonses before the Lords to have a true compt

* Council Reg., XV., 74.

of the town's Common Good, but they appear to have been a minority, as we find commissioners appointed to pass to the King and his Lords of Council to explain how matters actually stood, and to pursue the baillie and his fellow-dissentients as "conspirators against the town." Although not actually stated in the Council Register, there seems to have been the likelihood of a disturbance about Menzies' election at Michaelmas, 1537, as appears from a very significant letter written by the King the day before the election. In this letter, which is written from Old Aberdeen, and dated 30th September, the King grants the Council permission to elect such persons as are able and convenient by their common consent, according to use and wont, having special regard to their ability to administer in the various offices "by doing of justice." The principal part of the letter is the concluding portion, in which the King writes that "he willed them to live in liberty and freedom like burgesmen, but [without] outhrowing of outmen or great persons," and desiring them to keep this letter for their warrant. This question of "outmen" interfering in the burgh's affairs was one continual cause of trouble to the burgesses, and in 1538 this disturbance took a new form. On the completion of the Bridge of Dee, Bishop Dunbar had granted the Council the lands of Ardlair towards providing for the maintenance of the bridge in all time coming. When the tacks ran out in 1532 the Council ordered the lands to be set again to the then tenants, but William Leslie of Balquhain appeared at a Head Court and made a request that the lands should be set to him, he being ready to give as much as any other person. As an inducement he produced the King's letters in his favour, and offered to give a grassum of twenty pounds towards building the block-house, but Baillie Patrick Forbes solemnly protested that the lands should not be set or given away by way of feu while he was seated and placed as a magistrate. Some six years later, during Menzies' term of office, the question of letting Ardlair was again raised, when the Council agreed to set the lands for five years to

husbandmen only, and not to gentlemen. This resolution of the Council could not be agreeable to Baillie Patrick Forbes, who had procured the King's letters requiring that the lands should be set to him—manifestly an attempt to thwart the endeavours of the town to keep these lands from becoming a bone of contention between opposing factions—and consequently the Provost was directed to answer the King's letter. Provost Menzies, in his reply, narrates that Ardlair was given for upholding the Bridge of Dee, and that the lands "were situated between the lands of the Forbeses and the Leslies, who of old have been at great enmity, and they both desire to have entry to the lands, and, if any of them gets entry to them, it will in a short time occasion them to revenge their old displeasure, for which the town will be blamed," and, in consequence, the "haill" town being "conveened," declined to set the lands to any Forbes or Leslie, or to any other gentleman, but only to husbandmen. This letter the Provost carried personally to Edinburgh, and the result was evidently in favour of the wise policy pursued by the town, for in 1541, the lands were set on a tack of ten years to Baillie John Gordon, in consideration of his having paid the propine to the Queen's Grace on her first visit to the burgh, besides handing over a grassum of a hundred merks to the bridge funds. Meanwhile war had again broken out with England, and the calls on the town appear to have been exceptionally heavy, for, in addition to fitting out a ship for the King's service, and manning it with the necessary men, there was a party of no less than a hundred persons sent south to swell the King's army gathered on the Boroughmuir. The defeat at Solway Moss, closely followed by the death of James V., tended greatly to unsettle everything, and compelled the burgesses to again set about preparing measures of defence for the safety of the town. The deep game which was to be played around the person of the young Queen was the occasion of a request from the Earl of Huntly in 1543, that the town should furnish him with a company of young men to pass south for the service of the Queen and the realm. This service was

evidently the removing of the Queen and her mother from the insecure lodging of Linlithgow to a safer place of refuge at Stirling. The town, however, had to excuse themselves for their inability to aid his lordship, owing, as they state, to their loss by sea in men, gear, and ships, the long war, the want of merchandise, and the dearth and want in the country. From these causes they seek to be excused, as they could not furnish any company pleasant to his lordship or honourable to the town, while, moreover, the Governor had given them his permission to stay at home.

At the Michaelmas election of 1544, Menzies made a statement to the Council explaining that, although he had borne the office of provost for the past year, he had not fulfilled the duties as they should have been performed, and for which he solicits pardon. He further states that he has been murmured at heavily by neighbours for seeking to be elected every year, and therefore he requests that Baillie David Anderson might be chosen for the office for the ensuing year. This course was not followed, however, for Menzies was again re-elected, but not without a protest from Mr. John Gordon for himself and others in respect that there was considerable enmity and discord among the inhabitants, and it would be more desirable on that account to have another person as judge. Menzies promised, however, to amend if he had in any way offended Mr. Gordon or his friends in matters coming before him as provost. On the 16th January following (1544-5), Menzies resigned the office of provost, and the Earl of Huntly, Lieutenant of the North, was chosen in his place, while he was appointed his depute, the proceedings having been carried through with the consent of the whole town.

Huntly's assumption of the office of provost may have occurred in consequence of the landing at Leith of an English army, and his desire to be in a position to control both the civil and military powers of the burgh, in place of Menzies, who it was suspected favoured the designs of Henry of England.

16TH JANUARY, 1544-5—1546.

LVII. **George, Earl of Huntly**

(Council Reg., XVIII., 338).

George, fourth Earl of Huntly, was the elder son of John, Lord Gordon, by his wife Jean, a natural daughter of James IV. and Margaret Drummond. Born in 1513, he succeeded to the earldom on the death of his grandfather, Alexander, third Earl of Huntly, on 16th January, 1523-4. His education was entrusted to the Earl of Angus, and after his disgrace and banishment the young earl became attached to the person of James V., with whom he was a great favourite. Huntly on attaining his majority was admitted a privy councillor, and created Lord High Chancellor and Lord-Lieutenant of the North, and in 1535 the King further showed his trust in him by nominating him Lord-Lieutenant of the kingdom during His Majesty's visit to France. In the politics of the day Huntly was strongly opposed to the marriage of the young Queen with Edward VI., and did everything in his power to aid the Queen-mother in obtaining a French alliance for her daughter. He was present at the battle of Pinkie, 10th September, 1547, where he was taken prisoner and conveyed to Morpeth, from whence he escaped in December of the following year. He followed the Queen-mother to France, and with her returned home again, and seems to have held her favour with but slight interruption, although, on the advice of her councillor, D'Oysel, she took from him several of his posts, especially the lucrative one of Governor of Orkney.

On the return of Mary and the ascendancy of Murray, Huntly retired to the North, where he seems to have set about intriguing with France for the restoration of the old faith in Scotland, and these overtures coming to the knowledge of Murray, who had personal motives for having revenge on Huntly, he persuaded the Queen to take such measures as practically drove the earl into open rebellion.

The Queen, with Murray, made a Royal progress in the North, and the latter so managed matters that Huntly thought war preferable to submission, and so at the declivity of Corrichie, on the south side of the Hill of Fare, the Royal forces attacked Huntly and his followers on the 28th October, 1562, and utterly routed them. The earl was found dead on the field, smothered, some say, by his armour, while others say that he was murdered after the fight.

> "Then Murray tried to tak' the auld Gordon,
> An' mony ane ran wi' speid;
> But Stuart o' Inchbraik had him sticket,
> An' out gush the fat lurdane's bleid."

All writers are agreed in testifying that George, the fourth earl, was a man of pregnant parts, of which he gave ample proof in his accomplishments as a politician and a soldier. Surprise is often expressed that such a champion of Mary's faith should have been treated by her so harshly, and the only satisfactory solution is that she was at this period entirely under the control and direction of her half-brother, between whom and Huntly there existed the most deadly enmity. Huntly, by his marriage with Lady Elizabeth Keith, daughter of the Earl Marischal, had a family of nine sons and three daughters—Alexander, who died without issue; William, who was designed Bishop of Aberdeen, but died in Paris; Sir John, who was beheaded in the Castlegate after the battle of Corrichie, and who in a measure led his father to take the step he did; George, who succeeded as the fifth earl; James, bred for the Church, and presented to Rhynie, but went abroad and died at Paris in 1620; Adam of Auchindoun; Patrick of Gartly, slain at Glenlivet; Robert, killed at Corrichie; and Thomas, who died in Edinburgh. Of the daughters, Elizabeth married the Earl of Athol, Margaret the Lord Forbes, and Jean, who was married first to the Earl of Bothwell, and, after her divorce, to Alexander, Earl of Sutherland, and subsequently on his death to Alexander Ogilvie of Boyne.

On Huntly's appointment to the provostship, Thomas Menzies

was retained as depute, but this arrangement does not appear to have continued any time, as on the 18th May, 1544, writing from Stirling, the earl addresses himself to the Council, mentioning that he had received information that many burgesses were leaving the town with their goods, and not providing as they ought for its safety. He also instructs the Council and community that, during his absence, they are to obey his cousin and servitor, Mr. John Gordon, baillie; Henry Irvine, Alexander Rutherford, William Rolland, and none others; and he likewise informs them that he has given command to his friends to rise in their support if need be. At the Michaelmas election in 1545, the earl made choice of a Council to suit his own views, but not without protest from Thomas Menzies, acting for himself and his adherents. The election of this Council appears to have been made within the Greyfriars Convent, and here Menzies appeared and entered his protest against recognising any Council but such as was elected by the "toun as use has been past memory of man." This protest was productive of no good, however, but rather the reverse, for Baillie John Gordon, one of Huntly's firmest supporters, tauntingly told Menzies that all his "bughing sall not make it nor yet your stane house," while to Menzies' brother Gilbert, Gordon shouted "Weil, are ye lauchand, I sall gar you greit."

1547-75.

56. THOMAS MENZIES of Pitfoddels

(Council Reg., XIX., 399, &c.).

This term of twenty-nine years is the longest period on record during which the office of provost was held continuously by one person.

During the interruption by Huntly, Menzies, as we have mentioned, was appointed his depute, but does not appear to have ever exercised any real power in that position. The reason was apparently that in the matter of the politics of the day Menzies

took a different view of the situation from that taken by Huntly, for while the latter strongly favoured an alliance with France for the young Queen, Menzies' sympathies were more in favour of an alliance with England.

This difference in their political leanings is fully borne out in a communication concerning Scottish affairs presented to the Lord Protector of England by Robert Lockhart, Scotsman, dated London, 10th January, 1548-9, and now preserved at Hatfield House. In this bulky memorandum, Lockhart advocates a marriage contract between the youthful Edward and the infant Queen of Scotland, and advises the sending of an English army into Scotland before the arrival of the French army, so that the Queen may be got into the King's keeping. He further recommends the laird of Dun, the laird of Fyvie, the laird of Pitarrow, and the Provost of Aberdeen as likely parties to be dealt with for aid in the matter, and for this purpose he recounts the relationship these persons have to other prominent Scotchmen. On the other hand, he warns the Protector that the Governor of Scotland, the priests, the Earl of Argyll, and the Earl of Huntly are against the proposition, and recommends that the latter, who was then in England, a prisoner from the field of Pinkie, should not be suffered to go home. It would be entirely outside the scope of these memorials to recount in any detail the many changes which took place in the burgh during the long period Menzies held the civic chair, yet there are several points of interest which can hardly be overlooked. Prominent among these was the obtaining, in 1551, of a licence from the Crown to feu out the burgh lands and fishings for annual feu-duties, with a present payment of a heavy grassum. This method of managing the Common Good was entirely new, and as the benefits were at the first almost wholly monopolised by one section of the burgesses, the change was opposed at every step by those who were unwilling to see the ancient patrimony of the burgh parcelled out in this manner. Considerable litigation took place between the opposing factions in the endeavour of the one

party to obtain a reduction of the feuing, and in that of the Council party to prove that they were acting strictly within the legal rights conferred by the licence obtained from the Crown. The matters in dispute were the subject of compromise; and at a meeting of parties on 2nd January, 1556-7, it was agreed that all those who had previously held any lands or fishings on tack should continue to hold them at the new feu-duties, and that those persons to whom they had been feued should renounce their right on receiving repayment of the grassums they had paid. The effect of this policy on the finances was that a steady income was now secured to the burgh treasury, while a large portion of the debt owing by the town at this time was cancelled by means of the grassums paid; but against this present advantage the ever-increasing value of these lands and fishings became lost to the town for ever, and the Common Good became the poorer in after years owing to the alienation which took place at this time. The burden of taxation, we must remember, bore heavily on the burgesses, and relief in any shape became welcome to them, even though it involved the sacrifice of their common inheritance. As a sample of these taxations we might mention the continual drain that was made on the burgesses of all classes for the defence of the kingdom, and for that of the burgh in particular. In 1548 several heavy stents were made for such purposes as defending the burgh against the old enemies of England, licence to remain at home from the army assembled at Gladsmuir, for defence of the town against evil-advised neighbours of the country, and for the services of a hundred men to protect the burgh in these "present dangerous times." Some ten years later the taxations levied on the burgesses obliged them to take action, and so, on receipt of a notice for a large sum stented on the burgh for national purposes, they appointed Gilbert Menzies, the provost's son, to go to Edinburgh to complain to the Queen and the Lords of Secret Council "of the great exorbitant taxations imposed on this poor town, and the inhabitants thereof, for the past few years, and to state the indigence thereof and

poverty of the poor commons thereof, and to solicit remeid or remittance of some " part of the taxation.

Another change of much greater moment and far-reaching importance was that effected by the Reformation, by which the old faith merged itself into the new Evangel. The change in Aberdeen had nothing about it of a violent character, for the burgesses were quite alive to the fact that the meeting-places of priest and friar would suit equally well for parson and reader under the new *régime*. About 1550 the Council ordered the various silver chalices to be produced by the respective chaplains serving at the altars, and these were afterwards taken charge of by a committee of the Council, and ultimately sold, along with the other utensils which were not required. The Provost, all through the crisis does not appear to have acted very willingly, as, on one occasion, when a meeting of Head Court was convened, he was accused of leaving the town so as to avoid giving an expression on the matter before the burgesses, and when the meeting resolved to dismiss the whole singers of the Choir, the protest lodged by his son was not received in consequence of the action he had taken. In consequence of the change of religion, the obligation, or oath, taken by the office-bearers in the Council on appointment seems to have been modified, as in 1560 the oath to be taken by the provost on his election is engrossed in the Register at that date. The obligation was as follows:—" Be the living Lord, the eternal God quha maid hevin and erth and all thing of nocht and maid me to His awin image and similitud to be just and trew in all promises according to His Godlie will, quha also serches and knowis the hartis and thoughts of men, and hes promisit to revenge falsat, and to reward the treuith, I do heir promise and sueir in His presence and His holy angellis that I sall lelie and treulie after my wit and power deuly exerce the office of Provostrie of this burgh for the space of this year next following, and sall do equally justice both to puir and reche without feid or favour, nor sali not spair to exerce the same justlie for luff hatred winning tynsell nor na uther thing ma happin. Bot sall treulie

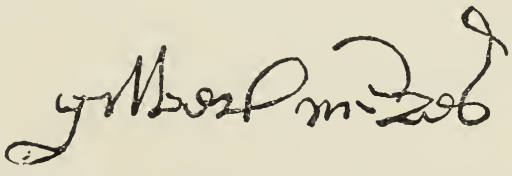
set furth and meyntene the same and libertie and privilege of this Burgh for the common weil and profit thairof. And also sall meyntene and furthset the fayth and religioun of Jesus Cryst at my uther power and sall be enemy to all thaim that reaistis and gane stands the same. Also I sall assyst concur fortify and furthset all things ordanit and concludit to be done be the nobill Councill of this gude toune in all thing concerning the advancement of God's glory and the libertie and fredome of this Burgh and Community thairof in equity and Justice as my wit understanding puissans and power will serve me to do at the will and pleasour of God quhilk I avow and promise to observe in presence of God and this Congregation."

1576-87.

LVIII. Gilbert Menzies of Cowlie and Pitfoddels

(Council Reg., XXIX., 4, &c.).

At the Michaelmas election in 1576 it would appear that Thomas Menzies was no longer able physically to hold the reins of office, and this is fully borne out by the record of his death two months after the election. Gilbert Menzies, who was elected at Michaelmas, 1576, was the eldest son of Thomas Menzies of Pitfoddels (56), by his marriage with Marion Reid. The Provost was in his fifty-fifth year when chosen to the highest civic office in his native burgh, having been born on 10th June, 1522.



Gilbert Menzies married Margaret Keith, a daughter of the laird of Troup, by whom he had the following issue:—George, his heir, who married his cousin, Violet Forbes, a daughter of Alexander Forbes of Pitsligo; John; Alexander, who was slain by William Forbes of Portlethen at the Loch of Loirston, on 16th May, 1580;*

* Pitcairn's Trials, VIII., 204.

Robert, who had a tack of the lands of Tulloch; and Andrew, apparently the youngest son, who was admitted a burgess of Guild, 20th September, 1605. The only daughter whose name has been identified is Isobel, between whom and Alexander Keith, son and apparent heir of James Keith of Auquhorsk, a contract of marriage was entered into, dated 23rd October, 1575.* The union was destined to be a short one and have a tragic ending, for the chronicler of Aberdeen has recorded that "Alexander Keyth of Owehorsk was slayne in Aberdene by the gudman of Balbithan, John Chamer, and departtit the vij day of June, 1584 yeris." Gilbert, on assuming the provostship, was by no means ignorant of the duties falling to the office, as during his father's lifetime he had on more than one occasion acted as his depute. As one of the magistrates, also, he had taken a very active part in the government of the burgh for several years past, and was thus in every way qualified for performing the duties required of him in his new capacity. In the matter of religion the Provost was not quite orthodox, for his leanings and inclinations were undoubtedly towards the old church and the old faith. Some indication of this is to be found in the protests he lodged on behalf of his father and himself regarding the various steps taken in connection with the Reformation in Aberdeen, such as the dismissal of the singers of the Choir and the sale of the silver and brass work of the church. His defection from the "true religion" appears to have attracted attention in high quarters, as there is a minute of the Privy Council, of date 17th March, 1573-4, in which "Gilbert Menzies of Cowly is becum actit and obleist of his awin confession and consent that at his returning to Abirdene he sall behave himself as ane obedient member of the Kirk of God, sall frequent the sermons and be participant of the sacraments with his brother and neighbours and sal be subject to the discipline of the ministry and session of the Kirk." In fulfilment of this agreement he granted security to the extent of a thousand

* Reg. of Contracts, Town House.

pounds that if he failed to obey he should enter himself before the Privy Council on fifteen days' warning. Notwithstanding this, however, the Provost did not apparently "behave himself as ane obedient member of the Kirk of God," for in August of the same year he was impeached by the session before a commission from the Regent, consisting of the Earl of Buchan, Lord Glamis, and Mr. James Balfour. The result was that "all his excusations were layed a syd," and he was commanded to join himself at the forthcoming communion or suffer excommunication without further delay. A break in the session records prevents us ascertaining the outcome of this quarrel, but the presumption is that the Provost conformed, outwardly at least, to the desire of the session.

About the year 1575 Menzies acquired the four mills of the town in security for monies advanced by him, and they remained in the hands of the family till redeemed in 1597 from the Provost's grandson for the sum of 5,000 merks.

In 1579 the Provost, with several others, had to defend an action which was brought at the instance of the Regent Morton for disfranchising the burgh, while, in connection with the fishings in Don, they had considerable trouble owing to a charter which the Regent had granted to his nephew, George Auchinleck of Balmanno, of the lands of Polgownie and Murcar, including the salmon fishings on the Don. Morton had a great antipathy to the burgh, and in many ways plainly showed this by harassing the burgesses with fines and needless taxations. The injustice of assigning their fishings on Don to his nephew was, however, more than the burgesses could brook, and so, taking advantage of the King's presence at Dunnottar in the summer of 1580, they presented a petition narrating the facts, and asking redress. On the 22nd June a meeting of the Privy Council was held in the Castle, when, after production of the town's writs, they passed a minute revoking Balmanno's grant of fishing as an encroachment on the town's rights under the charter of Robert I.

In 1585 the burgh was threatened with a visitation of the

plague, and we get some idea of the horror with which such a possibility was contemplated in the stringent measures passed for avoiding such a calamity. The Council ordered a port to be erected on the Bridge of Dee, while the town's ports were to be shut and strictly guarded, so as to prevent the intrusion of strangers. The burgesses were strictly prohibited from receiving any strangers to lodge within the town, and three gibbets were ordered to be erected—one at the Bridge of Dee, one at the Market Cross, and the third at the harbour mouth—for the purpose of executing summary justice on any infected persons arriving either by sea or land, or on any indweller who should break the town's statutes. That this was no idle threat appears evident from what took place on the 27th May, 1585, when Margaret Nune, spouse to William Norie, and Marion Young, relict of William Duncan, having been convicted of "housing, harbouring, and giving meat and drink to strangers," were adjudged to be punished by death. This sentence, on the request of Sir William Kar and Sir Robert Maxwell, was commuted to one of banishment during the Council's will. During the twelve years in which Menzies held the post of provost, there seems to have been continual disagreements as to the mode of election, particularly as to the value of the craftsmen's votes. These disputes occupied the attention of the Council for several years, and it was only after considerable discussion that the rights of the craftsmen in this and other matters were agreed to by both parties, and embodied in the Decree Arbitral or Common Indenture, which was dated 7th July, 1587. At the election in 1585 complaint was made by the burgesses as to "the hurtfull and preiudiciall" custom of continuing the magistrates in office year after year, and the following year Menzies was not elected by the usual method, for he "wes maid prowest not be the switt row, bot be the counsall and sertane commound wottis."* This voting by the "switt row," we are told, was the method adopted

* Miscell. Spalding Club, II., 58.

for "ewery man gettin his woitt." At the Michaelmas election of 1587, Menzies, who was in the running for the provostship, was not chosen by the free choice of those entitled to vote, for the majority nominated Alexander Rutherford, and he was by the "switt rowe" elected, every man being taken bound by oath to abide by the same. The Earl of Huntly was, however, present at this election as Menzies' friend, and it is recorded that he persuaded the Council to accept their former provost for another year, which they did along with certain of the "commonds." He had barely completed this year of office when his death occurred in his sixty-seventh year—"Gilbert Menzies of Petfodellis, and sumtyme Provest of Aberdeen, departitt the aucht day of November, 1588 yeirs."*

1588-89.

LIX. Thomas Menzies of Kirkhill and Durn

(Council Reg., XXXII., 401, 556).

As we have seen, there was evidently a desire for a change in the provostship, and, on the retirement of Gilbert Menzies, his brother Thomas managed to get himself elected, but the election appears to have been carried out in a legitimate manner. Thomas Menzies was the second son of Thomas Menzies of Pitfoddels (56) and Marion Reid, his spouse, and was admitted a burgess of the burgh on 26th June, 1548. He married Margaret Ogilvie, eldest sister and heiress of Alexander Ogilvie of Durn, the grandson of Sir William Ogilvie of Stratherne, and in this way, on his brother-in-law's death without issue, he became laird of Durn, in Banffshire. Previous to this he was known as of Kirkhill, in Nigg, a separate estate from the lands of Pitfoddels, but afterwards forming part of the

* Sum Notabil Things, 14.

lands of Torry. The issue of the marriage was at least two sons and two daughters—Thomas, who succeeded to Durn; and Paul, who was afterwards designed of Kinmundie; Isobel, who married John Lowson; and Marjorie, married to Provost Alexander Rutherford. A curious fact which might be mentioned here is that both brothers in turn became provosts of Aberdeen, and that while acting in that capacity both received the honour of knighthood.

The date of the Provost's death is uncertain, but it is probable that it took place after 1592, and before the Michaelmas election of 1595, as on the earlier date his son is described as apparent of Durn, while on the latter date there is no such qualification. It is believed he was buried in the Durn aisle in the parish church of Fordyce, where a tombstone at one time marked the place, but the monument has now disappeared.

On the death of his brother Gilbert, in November, 1588, the Provost entered into a curious controversy with a part of the Council as to the office of the Town Clerkship, which he claimed and was allowed to have by the majority of the members. Menzies' father and grandfather had both held the office for their respective lives, appointing deputies to carry on the work, and although Thomas was not heir to his brother, yet, being in the position of provost when the office fell vacant, he claimed it as a right pertaining to himself as a member of the family and as present provost. While the majority of the Council allowed the Provost's claim, there was an influential minority who strongly opposed it for the following reasons:—1. That the gift was in their hands as a committee for promoting the Common Good. 2. That the Provost's supplication, desiring the life-rent of the office, was expressly contrary to the Acts of Parliament. 3. That the office of clerkship and provostrie were noways compatible in one person, for one man cannot be judge and bear record of his own acts by himself or his substitute. 4. The meeting at which the grant was made was illegal for various reasons stated. To these objections the Provost replied that the objectors had nothing

to do with the clerkship, as it was outside their commission, and that it was the laudable custom of this town and all other burghs to gift the office *ad vitam*. As regards the question of plurality, he reminds the objectors that the Clerk of Register in the principal Justice Court was both clerk and judge, and that the sheriffs of heritage were both sheriffs and clerks. The outcome of the dispute was that the Provost was allowed to name his depute for one year, and the matter does not appear to have again come up for discussion.

The Menzies at this period appear to have nearly all adhered to the old faith, and it was this bond of communion doubtless which induced the Provost, along with his brother Gilbert, to execute on 1st June, 1588, a bond of man-rent in favour of the Earl of Huntly, "for our selffis, and takand the burding upon us for our sonis, kin, and freindis." *

One of the principal events which took place during Menzies' provostship was the fitting out of a ship of war by the town as part of the convoy which went to escort King James and his future queen, Anne of Denmark, to Leith. The vessel according to one account, was named the "Nicholas," and it appears she was admirably fitted out for the occasion. Of artillery she carried three iron cast pieces borrowed from the owners of the "James," and three cast pieces from the owners of the "Andrew," besides the town's falcon, while the stores were ample for her crew of twenty men. The vessel was gaily bedecked with flags and streamers of "taffety," and, under the command of Baillie John Collison, with David Endeaucht as his sailing master, she set sail on the 16th April, 1590, direct for Denmark. The expenses must have been considerable, for, besides the furnishings and stores, the commander carried £320 in his pocket from the common purse to defray incidental charges by the way.

With the re-election of Menzies in 1589 the office of provost had been held by members of this family, without a break, for

* Miscell. Spalding Club, IV., 240.

fifty-four years, while from the commencement of the century, the office had been held for only six years by parties other than members of the Pitfoddels family.

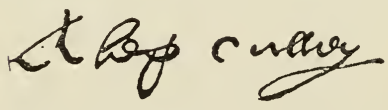
Surprise can hardly be expressed that the burgesses, or at least a section of them, felt that some action was necessary to put an end to this state of things, and accordingly a complaint was made to the Privy Council in September, 1590, in which certain grave charges were formulated against the "race of Menzeissis."* The principal pursuer in this action was John Cheyne, a member of the Council, who had all along insisted that the craftsmen or members of the various incorporated trades had not only a right to vote at the election of the Council, but were entitled also to be elected as members. The action resulted in the defenders being assoilzied from the conclusions of the summons raised against them, and Cheyne for a time lost his seat at the Council.

1590.

LX. **Alexander Cullen**

(Council Reg., XXXIII., 791).

Provost Cullen was a member of the old burgess family of that name, several members of whom had already held the office of provost. He married, about 1560, Elspet or Elizabeth Lumsden, a daughter, in all probability, of Mr. Robert Lumsden of Clova, one of the magistrates, who died 30th June, 1572. The issue of this marriage was Isobel, baptised by Adam Heriot, 7th December, 1563; Andrew, baptised 24th September, 1565, and married to Margaret Skene, a daughter of James Skene of Bandodell; Robert, baptised 23rd March, 1568-9; Alexander, baptised 31st July, 1570, and afterwards one of the magistrates,



* Appendix I.

married to Isobell Menzies; Patrick, baptised 23rd October, 1572; Gilbert, admitted a burgess on 24th September, 1591, and whose contract of marriage with Christiane Paip, a daughter of Mr. Robert Paip, advocate, is dated 2nd September, 1598, and Thomas, the youngest son, baptised 7th September, 1581, at one time Dean of Guild, and who married Christian, a daughter of George Rickart, their contract of marriage being dated 30th December, 1609. Elspet Lumsden, the Provost's first spouse, died in January, 1598-9, and on the 23rd of that month she was buried in S. Nicholas Church. Provost Cullen married for his second wife Elizabeth Gray, a daughter of the then deceased Baillie Gilbert Gray, the contract of marriage being dated 9th October, 1599. There were no children by this marriage, and his second wife having survived the Provost, she married before 27th April, 1614, Thomas Gordon of Grandholm. Provost Alexander Cullen died in October, 1610, and on the 31st of that month he was interred in the church "fre be reasoun of his foundatioun." The foundation mentioned relates to a deed of gift, dated 20th August, 1584, in which he mortified for the "restoration of the Parish Church of the burgh, and especially the northern corner of the same, in which the bodies of my predecessors are buried," certain annual feu-duties within the burgh of the yearly value of seven pounds Scots money. The mortification was under the express condition of free burial in the church for himself and his posterity of the name of Cullen, and that the Master of Kirk Work should "uphold luminaries in the said corner morning as well as evening during winter perpetually in time to come, with the privilege, also, of an honourable seat in this corner to me and my foresaids only." *

Shortly after Cullen's election a Head Court meeting was called to consider his Grace's letters charging the burgesses to pass along with the Earl Marischal for the recovery of the house of Deir, with the result that forty men were chosen and fully

* Mortification Book.

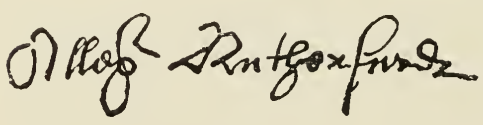
equipped as the town's contingent to the expedition. The election at Michaelmas, 1590, was somewhat later than usual owing to the fact that several of the Council were in Edinburgh defending the action already referred to which had been raised by several of their number for a reduction of the election of 1589 as having, along with a long series of prior elections, been made without proper authority. The Provost seems at one time to have held the lands of Cotton, near Aberdeen, as there is a disposition of the shadow half of these lands with the mill "upon the side of the Don callit Gordon's Miln" in his favour by John Gordon of Kinmundie, dated 20th January, 1578-9.

1591.

LXI. Alexander Rutherford of Rubislaw

(Council Reg., XXXIV., 3).

Alexander Rutherford was a son of Patrick Rutherford by his spouse Marjorie Menzies, the other members of the family of whom mention is made being David, and Katherine, who was married to James Cheyne, of Pennand, from whom she was divorced about the end of 1598. The cause of the divorce is not stated, but the Provost was a party to a deed of arrangement executed prior to the divorcement regarding the destination of the moneys secured under the marriage contract. Rutherford was twice married, his first wife, who, curiously enough, had the same name as his mother, was Marjorie Menzies, a daughter of Provost Thomas Menzies of Durn (59). By this marriage there was the following issue :—Marjorie, baptised 14th August, 1576, married to Patrick Forbes; Patrick, baptised 30th June, 1577; Nans, baptised 25th September, 1578; Elspet, baptised 17th April, 1580, married to Robert Gardyne, son and heir of Mr. Thomas Gardyne of Blairton; Alexander, baptised



23rd July, 1581, a writer of several poems, died 20th November, 1662, aged 81 years; Normand, baptised 3rd March, 1582-3; Thomas, baptised 2nd August, 1584; Jenis, baptised 20th February, 1591-2; and Richard, died 9th December, 1662. Marjorie Menzies died and was interred in S. Nicholas on 6th May, 1593. The Provost married for his second wife Jean Liddel, a sister of Dr. Duncan Liddel, who survived him, as appears from a contract between her and her stepson Alexander regarding the provisions of the settlements made between her and the Provost. Alexander Rutherford died in December, 1614, and was buried on the 24th of that month. He was in office at the time of his death, and at a meeting of the old and new Councils held thereafter it was resolved that no election should take place till Michaelmas following, the eldest baillie being appointed Moderator or Chancellor of the Council. Provost Rutherford was a Commissioner to the Parliament on several occasions, and in 1605 he was one of the four Commissioners elected to represent the Royal Burghs to consider the proposal for a union of the kingdoms, when it is told that he expressed himself so agreeably that the King drew a diamond ring from off his finger and presented it to him as a special token of his favour. This oration, delivered before King James and the Commissioners of both kingdoms, was in Latin, French, and "Scottish," and is said to have been to his great commendation.*

Provost Rutherford was proprietor of the lands of Rubislaw and the separate property of Northfield. On the 31st December, 1612, he granted a wadset in favour of John Forbes of Petnacaddel, a brother of William Forbes of Tolquhon, for the sum of three thousand merks. The bond which was over Rubislaw was redeemable at Whitsunday, 1618. Within six months, however, the Provost sold the lands to Thomas Forbes, son to the deceased John Forbes, for the sum of ten thousand five hundred pounds, and redemption of the wadset. The contract of sale is dated

* Maidment's Catal. of Scot. Writers.

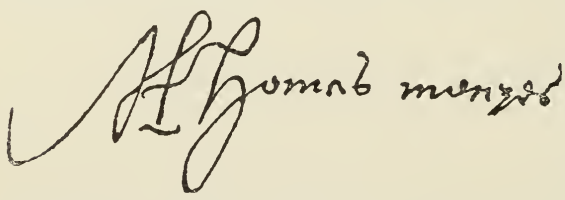
22nd May, 1613. Shortly after the Provost's death his son Alexander sold the property of Northfield on 20th June, 1616, to James Gordon of Auchmull, a brother of Thomas Gordon of Grandholm.*

1592.

LXII. Sir Thomas Menzies of Durn and Cults.

(Council Reg., XXXIV., 516).

This provost was the eldest son of Thomas Menzies of Durn (59), and his wife Margaret Ogilvie, and at the date of his election he is described in the minute as "apparent of Durn."



Like his father he also married an Ogilvie, his wife being Elizabeth Ogilvie, a daughter of the laird of Dunlugas, by whom he had at least two children who survived infancy, Thomas, who died in January, 1598-9, and Walter, who succeeded. In 1592 he had a Royal Charter of the lands of Durn, and about 1593 he acquired the lands of Cults, which, in his latter years, was his chief designation. Early in the year 1617 the Provost was knighted in the King's private chamber at Whitehall before several of the nobility, when James bore testimony to the ancient and honourable family from whom the newly-created knight had sprung. Three years later he undertook a second journey to London for the double purpose of presenting to the King in person a fine large pearl found in the Keltie or Ebry burn, a tributary of the Ythan, and to obtain an assay of some silver ore taken from a rich vein in Sutherlandshire. In return for his gift, the King conferred upon him certain lands near Dunfermline, together with the custom of merchant goods within the burgh of Aberdeen for life, but he

* Reg. of Contracts.

never enjoyed these, as on the return journey he took suddenly ill and died at Wooler on the Borders. It is uncertain where Sir Thomas was buried, but if at Wooler, no monument is now extant to mark his grave. With the Provost is said to have died the secret of the whereabouts of the silver mines in Sutherlandshire, for, as the historian of the House of Sutherland remarks, "In Sutherland there ar silver mynes which have been hitherto neglected. There was ane essay of these mynes carried to London the yeir of God 1620 by the deceast Sir Thomas Menzies, and being tryed in England, they were found to be verie rich. Bot he concealing in what pairt of Sutherland the same was found, and dying upon the way at that tyme in his return from London towards Scotland, the State is hitherto depryved of the benefits of these mynes." The election of Menzies at Michaelmas, 1592, was not accomplished without a vigorous protest from the Craftsmen and those who sympathised with them. The return of a member of this family might mean that there would be no further election for many years, and this the party of reform were resolved to stop by force, seeing that they had been defeated in the law courts. Signs of a rising to oppose the election were observed by the magistrates, and they issued a proclamation prohibiting burgesses and craftsmen from "convocating and convening themselves this day, to-morrow, or any other day in arms or otherways," without the magistrates' authority or the king's letters. This proclamation had little effect, however, and the disaffected members of the community began to gather on the day of the election in the Greyfriars Kirk and in the houses of Mr. John Cheyne and William Gray. In this serious crisis we are told that the magistrates, "not being disposed to use vigor or severity," appointed five of their number as a deputation to confer with the principal of the Commons and endeavour to get the people to obey their magistrates. In this mission they appear to have been only partially successful, as it is recorded in connection with the dispute that "upon Wedensday before Michaelmas Even it came to blood before the Greyfriars Kirk."

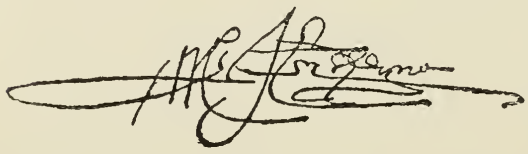
Little harm appears to have been done, and a few days afterwards concord was restored, when both parties met at the Womanhill and became reconciled, and "remitted" the blood between them, Menzies retaining the office of provost. The grievance against the Menzies' family is well expressed in the preamble of the bill of complaint lodged with the Privy Council in 1590, which sets forth that "The ancient liberties and priviligeis of the said burgh, especialie anent the free election of magistratis thairof has bene thir forescoir yeiris bigane pervertit and alsogat be the unlauchfull usurpatioun of the provestrie be the race of Menzeissis and of all utheris cheiff officeis of the same be thame, thair kin freindis and allya expres agains the loveable constitutionis of this realme and Actis of Parliament."

1593.

LXIII. **John Cheyne of Fortrie**

(Council Reg., XXXV., 2).

From what has been already said, it must be evident that Cheyne took an active part with the Craftsmen in their endeavour to obtain the municipal suffrage hitherto denied them, and his election at this time was in reality a triumph for them. Provost Cheyne, who was an advocate originally, entered the Council as a reformer in the matter of the abuses connected with the office of Town-Clerk. He also acted as oversman in the dispute between the Guild and Trades which was settled in 1587 by the Decree Arbitral or Common Indenture which for centuries regulated the connection between these two bodies. During his year of office he represented the burgh in Parliament, and received the thanks of the community, voted him at a Head Court. The Council also



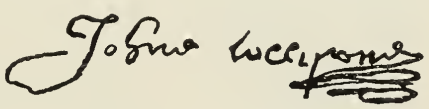
granted him an ample testimony under their privy seal of his having dutifully, uprightly, and diligently discharged the office of provost. Provost Cheyne was married to Jane Coutts by whom he had an only daughter, Besse, baptised 12th August, 1574. The date of Provost Cheyne's death has not been ascertained.

1594.

LXIV. John Collison of Auchlunies

(Council Reg., XXXVI., 2).

This provost was the son of Baillie Gilbert Collison by his wife Janet Seton, and a great-grandson of Provost John Collison (55). The other members of the family mentioned are three daughters Marzeon; Margaret, married to Walter Collison, and Isabella. In one of the many witch trials which took place about this time, a curious incident in the early history of the Provost was revealed in the "dittay" or charge made against Janet Wischert, spouse of John Leys. The counts of the indictment include the following:—"Item thou beand nurische to Issobell Collisoun, sister german to John Collisoun Provest, efter thou hed fosterit the said Issobell, thou desyrit thair mother that thou micht hef the said John Collisoun to foster and nuriche; quha, knowing that the milk was neir away, refusit to gif him the to foster. Immediatlie thairefter thou past forth of the hous and bocht rottoun poysoun to haif poysonit the said John, and the mother of the said John, persewing the to be in a furie and rage, suspectet that thou wald haif murtherit him; and therfor Merione Forbes and Merione Gray incontinent rypit the, and gat upon the forsaid poysoun quhairwith thou thocht to haif murthourit and poysonit him. Testifeit be the said John



Collesoun and Marione Forbes." The charges against the poor woman were so very circumstantial that the Assize had no difficulty in making up their minds, and the doom of the court was that she should be "brint to the deid."* Provost Collison was twice married, his first wife being Bessie Leslie, daughter of William Leslie, fourth Baron of Wardis, by his wife Janet Innes. Bessie Leslie died in October, 1588, and the Provost married for his second wife Jean Hay, who survived him. The Provost's family, so far as known, consisted of Thomas, his heir, who married Jean Menzies, and succeeded to Auchlunies on his father's death; Alexander; Paul; Gilbert; John, who died in March, 1624; Cristan, baptised 26th December, 1583; Margaret, baptised 19th June, 1585; Kathrine, baptised 8th October, 1588; and Jean, baptised 19th December, 1591. Provost Collison died in August, 1621, and was interred in S. Nicholas on the 21st of that month. In an example of his father's seal, the arms borne by the family appear to have been a fess between a star and two cinquefoils in chief, and two peascods in base. On the election of Collison to the provostship, it appears that his residence was in Torry, and that he had no house in the burgh. This was considered to be a disadvantage to one holding the position of provost, and so on the 30th September, immediately following the election, the Council took the matter into consideration, and resolved that he should "transport himself, wyff, bairnis, and familie to this burgh, and dwell therein during the tyme of his office, and be reasoun he hes not a ludging off his auin within this burght, ordanit Alexander Ewyn, Deane off Gild, to prouyd for ane ludging to him."†

Scarcely had Collison been elected when the issue of the

* Miscell. Spalding Club, I., 93. † Council Reg., XXXVI., 3.

battle of Glenlivet was made known to the burgesses, and on the 23rd October the King in person entered the burgh on his way northwards to punish the rebellious Huntly and his followers. On the occasion of his short stay the King was treated liberally, and a tax of £1,600 was stented for the support of the army, which to the number of a thousand men was encamped near the city. The burgesses had on many previous occasions had to suffer, and that severely, for their sympathies with the Gordon family, but they were evidently determined at this time to propitiate the King, and show His Majesty they had no sympathy with Huntly in his endeavours to re-establish the old religion. A suggestion made during Collison's term of office that the town should have four congregations and four sessions is quoted as evidence that the burgh was rapidly increasing in population, for it is to be borne in mind that the population at the end of the sixteenth century was as great, if not greater, than it was near the close of the following century. The explanation of this state of matters is to be found in the great depopulation which took place during the civil war.

1595.

62. Sir THOMAS MENZIES of Cults

(Council Reg., XXXVI., 332).

In July of 1596 a meeting of the Convention of Burghs was held within the town, and the matters in dispute between the Council and Craftsmen were submitted to them for final settlement. By the Decree Arbitral of the Convention it was appointed that the Trades should have ten votes in the election of office-bearers, while the Guild should have thirty-one, and that the former interest should be represented by two craftsmen at the Council Board. This solution of the difficulty which had agitated both the Council and Craftsmen for many years was accepted by both parties, and continued to be the practice down to the period of the Burgh Reform Act of 1832.

1596.

61. ALEXANDER RUTHERFORD OF RUBISLAW

(Council Reg., XXXVI., 631).

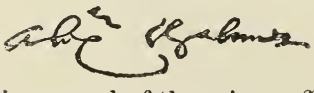
The principal event during this year of office was the public avowal by the Popish earls—Huntly and Errol—of the error of their ways and their admission into the communion of the Church. The ceremony was made the occasion of much pomp and show, and the whole affair was carried out with great solemnity, followed by unlicensed rejoicings. On Saturday the 25th June, 1597, a solemn fast was proclaimed, and on the following day the principal ceremony was carried out, within the old Church of S. Nicholas, before a large assembly of "nobillmen, baronis, gentilmen and common pepill, sic a confluence," says an eye-witness, "that the lyke was neiver sein in that kirk." On the following day the rejoicings commenced, and were continued with that heartiness and thoroughness which distinguished such functions in the olden time. The two earls, the King's Commissioners, and a large company were entertained by the provost and magistrates in the Town House, and several of the number were on the same occasion admitted honorary burgesses of the burgh.

1597.

LXV. **Alexander Chalmers of Cults**

(Council Reg., XXXVII., 2).

Alexander Chalmers was the son of Alexander Chalmers of Cults, by his spouse, Elspet or Elizabeth Irvine. He revived the traditions of his house by taking an active share in the management of the burgh affairs, for, during the century prior to this date no member of the family had filled the civic chair. Provost Chalmers, besides serving the community in several of the minor offices of the Council, also represented the burgh in the Parliament held at Edinburgh in December, 1586.



From some cause, the details of which are unknown, his estate of Cults, in Tarland, was escheated on 3rd February, 1590-1, and gifted to James Mowat, son and heir of the deceased Margaret Moir. The escheat, however, could never have been carried out, as the Provost appears to have exercised full control over his lands. Provost Chalmers married Janet, or Jean, Lumsden, a daughter of Robert Lumsden of Clova, advocate in Aberdeen, by whom he had the following issue:—Gilbert, his heir, married Christian Con, and who sold Cults in 1612 to the Laird of Lesmoir; Alexander, born in 1573, died while an infant; Jean, baptized 13th October, 1575; David, born in 1577, died in infancy; Alexander, of Hazelhead, born in 1578, married for his first wife, Beatrice Chalmers, by whom he had issue, a son and two daughters; Norman, baptized 21st August, 1580; William, born in 1583, became minister at Boyndie; Robert, born in 1590, was admitted a Burgess of Guild on 25th August, 1616; Marjory, baptized 7th March, 1581-2, married to John Ury of Pitfichie, and became the mother of General John Ury of Pitfichie; and Jean, the youngest daughter, who was twice married—first to Robert Mar, burgess, and afterwards to George Anderson, merchant. Provost Alexander Chalmers died in 1601; for on the 19th October of that year, there is on record that Alexander Chalmers, Provost, was buried in S. Nicholas Church. His relict, Jean Lumsden, was still alive in 1628. Among the fine oak carving that adorned the old West Church of S. Nicholas, and which has disappeared to a large extent within the present century, there was an oak form or seat with the arms of the family, a demi-lion issuing from a fess with a fleur-de-lis in base, and the following inscription:—"Alexandri de Camera consulis ejusque familiæ multorum sæculorum prosapia honoribusque conspicuæ requietorium et cathedra, 1313"—the last resting place and chair of Alexander Chalmers, Provost, and of his family, renowned for an ancestry and for honours of many centuries. During Chalmers' term of office, and prior to that date, there seems to have been an extraordinary outbreak of zeal in the discovery and punishment

of witches, and in 1597 the then Dean of Guild, William Dun, received the sum of £47 3s. 4d. in recompense for his labours in burning these unfortunates. In the same year, also, the Council added to the manufactures of the burgh by permitting Michael Wandail, a Fleming, to carry on his trade of weaving grograms, worsets, and stamings, without the jurisdiction of the Weaver Trade, on the condition that he should take an apprentice to learn the trade.

1598.

61. ALEXANDER RUTHERFORD of Rubislaw
(Council Reg., XXXVIII., 2).

1599.

60. ALEXANDER CULLEN
(Council Reg., XXXVIII., 860).

During this year the magistrates had to defend their undivided right to the forest of Stocket against a claim made by Old Aberdeen that, in virtue of a charter of King Malcolm, the Bishop of Aberdeen's tenants of the lands of Murthill had a right of pasturage within the Royal forest of Stocket. In April, 1600, King James again visited the burgh along with his Court, and they were received and entertained in the best manner; for, besides voting the King a present of 3,000 merks, the Council spent some 550 merks additional for wine and spiceries. During the following month the Queen paid her first visit to the town, and though the reception did not attain the magnificence with which the Scottish Queen was welcomed almost a century earlier, it took nearly two thousand pounds from the common purse to provide the necessaries for her entertainment.

1600.

61. ALEXANDER RUTHERFORD of Rubislaw
(Council Reg., XXXIX., 624).

On 5th August, 1601, the anniversary of the mysterious Gowrie Conspiracy, the Council, in terms of the deliverance of

the Estates, observed the day as one devoted to public thanksgiving for the preservation of the King. The order of the Council for the day provided that all the inhabitants should accompany the magistrates through the town singing psalms and praising God, and thereafter to assemble beside the cross, where wine was to be drunk and the glasses broken. A special feature of the day's proceedings was doubtless the reading of the latin treatise composed by Thomas Cargill, the master of the Grammar School, congratulating His Majesty on his escape, and for which a grateful Council allowed him the sum of £20. Rutherford had the pleasure before demitting office to present to the Council a charter from James ratifying and confirming the burgh's former privileges, as also the more recently acquired Church property consisting of the revenues of the various altarages within S. Nicholas Church. The cost of this charter was close on 4,000 merks, and, although this was a large sum, the Council must have had reasons, which are not now so plainly discernible, for obtaining such a charter of confirmation as that of 1601.

1601.

60. ALEXANDER CULLEN

(Council Reg., XL., 183).

It was Provost Cullen who had the honour of conferring the freedom of the burgh on Laurence Fletcher and several others of "His Majesty's servants" on the 23rd October, 1601. Reference has been made over and over again to the possibility of Shakespeare being one of the company who performed plays within the burgh on this occasion, but the evidence of the Council Register is against any such supposition. Had Shakespeare been one of the party there is no reason for supposing that he would not have been honoured, since his fame was by this time well established, and the Council, moreover, conferred the freedom of the burgh with no niggardly hand.

1602.

62. Sir THOMAS MENZIES of Cults
(Council Reg., XL., 801).

On the 30th March, 1603, word was received in the burgh of the accession of James to the Crown of England by the death of Elizabeth on the 24th of that month. The inhabitants were ordered by sound of trumpet and drum to assemble immediately within S. Nicholas Church, while preparations were made for having the bells rung and bonfires lighted on the streets. Directions were at the same time given for having the cross decorated and an abundant supply of wine and spiceries provided, so that "all godly merriness and pastime" might be used to express joy and gladness. These demonstrations appear to have been too much for the old bell of the church, named Nicholas, as, shortly after this, instructions were given to send it to Campvere to be recast.

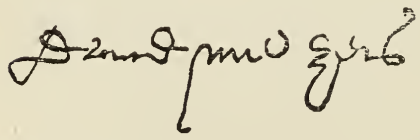
1603.

61. ALEXANDER RUTHERFORD of Rubislaw
(Council Reg., XLI., 383).

1604.

LXVI. **David Menzies, Elder**
(Council Reg., XLI., 908).

Provost Menzies was the son and heir of Gilbert Menzies, elder, who died in October, 1571,* and was designated "elder" to distinguish him from David, the son of Robert Menzies, who was also a member of the Council for several years. The Provost was married to Margaret Leslie, who died in February, 1590-1, and had issue an only daughter, named Marjorie, baptized 3rd May, 1576, who



* Miscell. Spalding Club, III., 156.

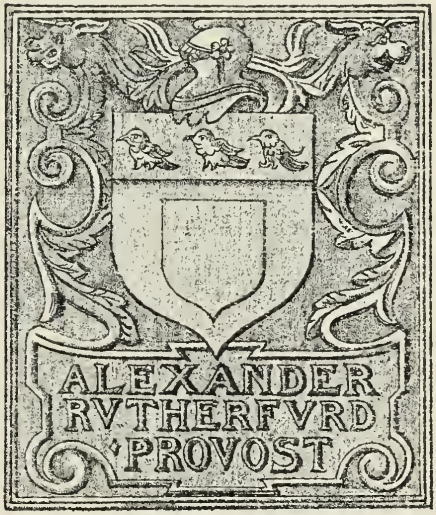
married, in 1596—contract of marriage is dated 25th November* —Gilbert Gray, eldest son of the then deceased Gilbert Gray, burgess. Provost Menzies died in December, 1606, and on the 13th of that month he was buried in S. Nicholas Churchyard.

1605.

61. ALEXANDER RUTHERFORD OF RUBISLAW

(Council Reg., XLII., 378).

In this year, as already noticed, Rutherford was one of the four Commissioners appointed from among the burghs to confer as to the proposed union of the two kingdoms. An interesting memento of Provost Rutherford has come down to us in the shape of a beautifully carved wardrobe, preserved in the vestry of the East Parish Church, and which was made during this term of office. The door of the wardrobe, which stands nearly seven feet in height, is composed of two panels, the upper one containing one of the earliest carved representations of the town's arms, and the date 1606, while the lower panel contains the Provost's arms, viz.—an orle, in chief three martlets, and below the arms "Alexander Rvtherfvrd, Provost."† This wardrobe may have been for the private use of the Provost as one of the elders



* Reg. of Contracts.

† These arms are somewhat different from those appearing on the seal (1578) of Baillie Alexander Rutherford, which were—on a fess, three martlets, between a mullet in chief and a boar's head erased in base.—*College Charters.*

of S. Nicholas Church for holding his books, or it may have been gifted to the church by the Provost as part of the additional furniture rendered necessary when the church was divided into two congregations. The news of the Gunpowder Plot was received in town on the 13th November, and the magistrates issued an order for the whole town to attend church on Sunday following to return thanks for the deliverance of the King and nobility of the realm. A broadside, which is still preserved in the City Charter Room, was at the same time delivered to the magistrates for open proclamation, in which a description of Percy is given, and an exhortation made to apprehend him alive if possible, so that the names of the other conspirators might be obtained.*

1606.

60. ALEXANDER CULLEN

(Council Reg., XLII., 946).

1607.

61. ALEXANDER RUTHERFORD of Rubislaw

(Council Reg., XLIII., 280).

1608.

60. ALEXANDER CULLEN

(Council Reg., XLIII., 728).

The pest or plague which had been raging with terrible force in most parts of Scotland for a year or two previous to this date now appeared in the burgh notwithstanding the vigilance exercised by the Council. The visitation appears to have been very severe, as a Walter Findlason, of S. Andrews, was engaged as "clenger," with orders to burn the dead bodies of those who had died from the disease.

* The description of Percy is as follows:—"The said Perey is a tall man, with a great broad beard, a good face, the colour of his beard and head mingled with white haires, but the head more white than the beard, he stoupeth somewhat in the shoulders, well-coloured in the face, long footed, small legged."

1609.

61. ALEXANDER RUTHERFORD of Rubislaw

(Council Reg., XLIV., 108).

1610.

60. ALEXANDER CULLEN

(Council Reg., XLIV., 686).

Provost Cullen died during the first month after taking office, and at a meeting of the Council held on the 1st November, Alexander Rutherford was elected to the vacant chair.

1st November, 1610-14.

61. ALEXANDER RUTHERFORD of Rubislaw

(Council Reg., XLIV., 744, *&c.).*

The rule which had been strictly observed for the past twenty years of having a change in the provostship every year was now broken through by Provost Rutherford, and he continued in office up to his death in December, 1614.

1615-20.

62. Sir THOMAS MENZIES of Cults

(Council Reg., XLVII., 316).

On Provost Rutherford's death the vacancy was not filled up, as already noticed, and it was not till the Michaelmas election of 1615 that Menzies assumed office.

The chief municipal work carried out during the six years of office now under review was the building of a ward-house or jail at the east end of the Town-House, part of which can still be seen from Lodge Walk. On the 13th August, 1616, a meeting of the General Assembly of the Church was held in Aberdeen, which was called by the King's Letter, for suppressing the growth of Popery, which, it was said, had taken deep root in

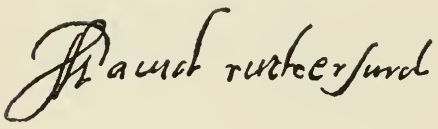
some parts of the country. To this Assembly the Provost and John Collison were appointed Commissioners. The following year a new charter was obtained from James ratifying all the old privileges and extending some of them, besides homologating an Act of the Scottish Parliament, which declared that the Crown feu-duty or burgh maills should be in Scotch money instead of sterling as mentioned in the charter of King Robert I. in 1319.

2ND OCTOBER, 1620-21.

LXVII. **David Rutherford**

(Council Reg., XLIX., 737, &c.).

Sir Thomas Menzies having died on the return journey from London, David Rutherford was elected in his place on the 2nd October. It is a curious fact worthy of notice that Menzies was the third provost in succession who had died while in office.



Provost David Rutherford was a brother of Provost Rutherford of Rubislaw (61), and was married to Elizabeth Cullen, a daughter of Provost Cullen (60). His wife died in February, 1628, and was buried in the Cullen Aisle free, in terms of her father's mortification to the Kirkwork charge of the burgh.* On the 24th September, 1608, he made over the sum of one hundred pounds to be "bestowed and employed upon profit to the weel use and utilite of the beddals of St. Thomas' Hospital of Aberdeen," and he further undertook the obligation "that when it sall please God to call him out of this world, he sall, in his letter will and legacie, leve to the said hospitall and beddals therof the soume of feftie merkes, money forsaid to be mortified" for the same purpose as the hundred pounds. The magistrates, on their part, granted, in consideration of these

* Kirk and Bridge Work Accounts.

benefactions, that he and his heirs should have the presentation of one beidman to the hospital when the place shall become vacant.* In 1621 a meeting of the Convention of Burghs was held in Aberdeen, which the Provost attended as Commissioner, and as best qualified to dispense the hospitality of the burgh. From the accounts of that year it appears that no less a sum than nearly £530 was spent in banquets, &c., held in Alexander Rutherford's house. During June of the same year he attended, along with Baillie George Nicolson, a meeting of Parliament held in Edinburgh, and was allowed £266 13s. 4d. for his expenses on the occasion. It was during the term of Rutherford's provostship that the art of printing was first introduced into the burgh, when Edward Raban transferred his press from the sign of the "A.B.C." in St. Andrews and set it up at Aberdeen under the new sign of the "Towne's Armes." Kennedy says that the former provost, Sir Thomas Menzies, and Bishop Patrick Forbes were chiefly instrumental in persuading Raban to come north; but, while this may be so, we think no small part of the credit is due to Dr. Barron, who had already employed Raban to print some of his works in St. Andrews.

1622.

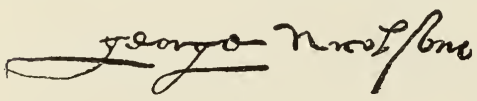
LXVIII. **George Nicolson**

(Council Reg., L., 407).

Provost Nicolson was the second son of Thomas Nicolson, who was dead by the 17th May, 1580, when his eldest son, Thomas, and his second son, George, were admitted burgesses of Guild. The Provost was married to Marjorie Howison, by whom he had the following family:—Thomas, admitted a burgess of Guild on the 23rd September, 1625, afterwards one of the magistrates of the burgh, and proprietor of the lands of Pitmedden; George; Christane, who died in the beginning of January,

* Mortification Book.

1628; Marjorie and Agnes, both baptised 5th July, 1606; and a daughter unnamed, baptised 1st November, 1613. The Provost's son, Thomas, appears as one of the persons who petitioned Parliament in 1644 for the investigation of a process raised against Sir Alexander Gordon of Cluny and his associates by the "relict and barnes of vmqll William Brown for his pretendit slauchter." Shortly after this we find that Gordon was warded in Edinburgh at the instance of Sir Thomas Nicolson, advocate a son of Baillie Thomas Nicolson, for a debt of 1,100 merks with interest. Provost George Nicholson died in February, 1624, and on the 22nd of that month he was buried in S. Nicholas Churchyard. A grandson of his became one of the Lords of Session, with the title Lord Kemnay, taken from the estate which he had purchased. During the period of his office, the Provost, on 2nd July, 1623, at a Council meeting then held, intimated his intention of giving six hundred merks "for the glorie of God and relief and helpe of the poore indigent people within this burgh, who are intertained and keeped from begging be weeklie contributione, and to helpe and make upe a stocke of money for ther use to relieve and ease the nightboures of the toune." Other benefactions of the Provost were a hundred pounds for the benefit of S. Thomas' Hospital, and six hundred merks for behoof of the poor of the burgh.



1623-33.

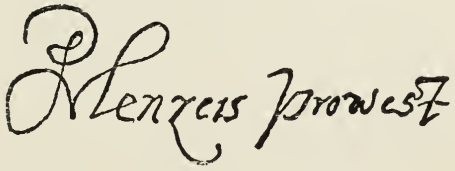
LXIX. Sir Paul Menzies of Kinmundy

(Council Reg., LI., 66, &c.).

Provost Menzies was the second son of Provost Thomas Menzies of Durn (59), by his spouse, Margaret Ogilvie, and was admitted a burgess of Guild on the 22nd November, 1588. The

Sir PAUL MENZIES
of Kinmundy.

Provost married Euphemia Finlayson, and had a large family, among whom were the following:—Margaret, baptised 21st September, 1611; Jonatt, baptised 29th December, 1612; Thomas, baptised 31st January, 1614; James, baptised 18th June, 1615; John, baptised 26th November, 1616; Alexander, baptised 1st January, 1618; Patrick, a name son of the Bishop, baptised 30th June, 1619; Margaret baptised 22nd August, 1620; William, baptised 8th September, 1622; and Thomas, baptised 14th November, 1623; other children were Paul, Gilbert, and Robert. From the fact that John is always described as the eldest son, the first two are supposed to have died in infancy, and it may be their deaths that are referred to in the Master of Kirk and Bridge Works Accounts, when, on 20th December, 1623, and 16th March, 1629, "ane berne of Paull Menzies, Provost," was buried. Menzies, unlike the other members of his family, notably Pitfoddels and Balgownie, seems to have early embraced the reformed faith, for in 1611 we find him acting as one of the "sermon catchers" who took note of those absent from church, and in 1620 he was elected an elder of S. Nicholas Church.* During the early years of his provostship little of interest is recorded until the war scare of 1626-7, when a threatened landing of the Spaniards upon this coast put the whole town and county into a panic. Elaborate preparations were made to secure the town in case a landing should be effected, while a series of bale fires or beacons were erected throughout the county to give warning to the barons and lairds so that they might render all possible help on the shortest notice. Happily, however, the preparations were unnecessary, for, although a Spanish fleet did appear off the coast, no landing was attempted, and the town



* Session Records, I., 77.

again resumed its normal condition after having undergone an experience which must have recalled the previous struggles with the old enemies of England, who had now become friends and allies.

In 1632 the old church bell Laurence was removed from the steeple of S. Nicholas in order to be shipped for Flanders to be recast, a large "reft" having been made in the bell. Some delay took place in having the bell shipped, and it was two years later before the work was completed at a cost of over twelve hundred pounds. The new inscription which was then put on the bell commemorated the fact that "at the expense of the community it was recast in the year 1634, while Paul Menzies of Kinmundy, Knight, was Provost." The first scheme for supplying the inhabitants with pure water was introduced to the notice of the Council during Menzies' term of office, when, in 1632, a proposal was submitted for bringing fountain water into the town. The principal supply was at this time derived from the Loch, which, as the minute of 12th September says, "is filthillie defyillit and corruptit, not onlie be gutteris daylie rynning in the burne, but also be litsteris and the washing of clothes and abwssing of the water in sindrie partis, with wther sorts of uncleanness." The new scheme proposed to ereet fountains or wells in various parts of the burgh, and notwithstanding that the cost was somewhat heavy, the burgesses of all classes agreed that the work should be carried out, and that they should be stented for the same. The various crafts, through Thomas Gardyn, the Deacon Convener, promised a subscription of a thousand merks towards the scheme.

At the Council meeting on the 15th May, 1633, the Provost and Baillie Patrick Leslie were nominated Commissioners to the approaching session of Parliament, as also to attend the coronation of Charles I., which was to take place in Edinburgh during the following month. That on such a high occasion the Commissioners might proceed south in a manner befitting an ancient and honourable burgh like Aberdeen, the sum of three thousand

merks was voted to defray their expenses. Part of this grant was spent in repairing the foot mantle used by the Commissioners when riding to the Parliament and also in the purchase of a new set of harness and trappings for the Provost's horse.* The local programme for celebrating the coronation was carried out on the 19th July, the day after the ceremony in Edinburgh, with great heartiness, the Council having "ordanit that the haill bells to be rung, faill fyres to be set on be everie man befoir his awin hous, the croce to be hung with tapestrie, twa punsheouns of wyne, with the spycerie in great abundance to be brocht and spent at the croce, the tuelf piece of ordnance on the Castlehill to be shot, and the time between to be spent in schooting of muskatis and burning of poulder." At the meeting of Council on the 14th August following, when the Provost made his report as Commissioner to the late Parliament, the clerk has entered in the sederunt—Sir Paul Menzies, for the outlay by the town had not been altogether in vain, since their provost was one of the fifty-four gentlemen knighted by Charles during his stay in Scotland.†

In August, 1639, the Provost, now an old man, had to mourn the loss of his eldest son John, who was drowned while endeavouring to cross the North Esk.‡ Spalding, who narrates the incident,§ says that his body was brought home to Aberdeen, "and vpone the 22nd day of August wes bureit with volie of muscat insted of funerall sermon, as wes wont to be givin, and many teires sched for his vntymlie death, being a brave youth of singular expectatioun." Although Menzies lived to see the commencement of the struggle between the King and the Parliament, his age prevented him taking any active part in upholding the King's authority, for there is little doubt that his leanings would have been towards the Royalist cause. The Provost died in his own house in Aberdeen on Saturday, 18th December, 1641, aged eighty years, and on the following Monday he was honourably

* Dean of Guild's Accounts, 1632-3. † Council Reg., LII., 113, 115, 116.
‡ Council Records, Montrose. § Memorials of the Troubles, I., 230.

buried in the south-west corner of the old church of S. Nicholas. His widow who survived him for over eight years, died early in March, 1650, and was interred beside him. Provost Menzies' portrait, by his friend Jamesone, hangs in the hall of Marischal College, and bears to have been painted in 1620, when the subject was 67 years of age. This makes a discrepancy in the Provost's age at the time of his death, as his tombstone says he was eighty, and by the date on the portrait he would in 1641 have been eight years older. The portrait shows "under a bald dome a set of fine, regular features, and the whole expression and dress bespeak the gentleman. A rich lace collar, reaching from the ears to a point half-way down the breast, forms a suitable background to the flowing, pointed beard."* His arms, with the motto—"Vive vt Vivas" are painted on the upper right hand corner. Over his grave in the old Church of S. Nicholas there was placed a handsome slab of black marble, which, though now mutilated, shows that it had once been adorned with a large inlaid brass border, but when or by whom removed no information can now be obtained. On the top of the stone there is sculptured the Provost's arms—the usual Menzies' coat—under a knight's helmet, and below a Latin inscription, of which the following is a translation:—"Sacred to Almighty God and to the memory of Paul Menzies of Kinmundy, knight — who descended from a noble family, spent his life here: being twelve times elected by the unanimous vote of the citizens, held the chief magistracy of the city for as many years, endeared to all by his mild disposition and the courtesy of his manners: once married and happy in that marriage: at the age of eighty, in the month of December, 1641, laid down his mortal remains in hope of a happy resurrection." There are quite distinct traces, though now illegible, of a longer inscription having been originally on the stone, but the feet of many generations of worshippers passing over it have destroyed the record. Menteith, however, has

* Bulloch's Jamesone.

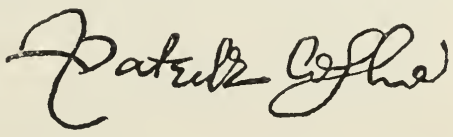
preserved what of it was legible in his day, and from it we learn that the stone was laid down by the Provost's heir, Alexander, who succeeded him in the estate of Kinmundy—"Alexander, his son and heir, caused this monument to be erected to the best of parents. Under this stone also rest the bones of Barbara Gordon, spouse of the said Alexander, who went from life, 19th October, 1657."*

1634.

LXX. Sir Patrick Leslie of Iden

(Council Reg., LII., 174).

Provost Leslie was the elder son of Patrick Leslie, burgess, by his wife, Isabella Seton, and became proprietor of the lands of Iden, now known as Eden, situated in the parish of King-Edward, on the banks of the Deveron, between Turriff and Banff, by purchase from the Meldrums.† The other members of Patrick Leslie's family were John, for some time one of the Magistrates, died, 17th January, 1643; and Katherine, married to William Robertson, merchant. The Provost was twice married, his first wife being Jean Leslie, a daughter of John Leslie, tenth Baron of Balquhain, by whom he had issue four sons and two daughters. The names of the children of the first marriage were Patrick, who, on 20th May, 1645, married the Honourable Miss Fraser, a daughter of Lord Saltoun of Philorth, and died in London in 1680; John, who married Miss Galloway, and had issue; Alexander; Isabella, married on 18th October, 1642, to Alexander Gordon of Birsmoir, and whose marriage is described by Clerk Spalding; Mary, married to Alexander Lumsden of Ruthrieston; and Robert, baptised 1st November, 1630, died the same month.



* Cf. Scottish Notes and Queries, I., 52. † Family of Leslie, III., 412.

Jean Leslie having died in November, 1630, the Provost thereafter married for his second spouse Isabella Cheyne, eldest daughter of Baillie John Cheyne and his spouse Elizabeth Cruickshank, by whom he had the following children:—Thomas, baptised, 6th May, 1634; Annas, baptised 16th April, 1638; Bertha, baptised 17th February, 1640; William, baptised 17th January, 1642; George, baptised 20th December, 1644, and succeeded to Iden; a son, baptised 9th June, 1646; Elspet, baptised 23rd July, 1648; and Walter, baptised 20th May, 1654, died unmarried in Poland. Provost Leslie was a man of considerable repute, and figured largely in the troublesome times of the civil war, being a most rigid Covenanter, or as Spalding calls him, "a strong Covenanter," and later, in 1644, "a wehement Covenanter," while his son Patrick, he characterises as an "arch Covenanter." His strong partizanship was the occasion of much trouble at the elections by the interference of the King, as we shall see, but either his faults had been overlooked or the execution at Whitehall in 1649 had changed his bias, for in 1651 when Charles II. visited the burgh he conferred upon him the honour of knighthood.

The Provost died in 1660, and was survived by his second spouse, who died about the beginning of May, 1666.* Leslie was one of the Commissioners who attended the Parliament in 1633, and for some reason or other, most probably by his anti-Royalist tendencies, seems to have greatly offended the King, who, on learning of his election to the office of provost, took immediate action to have him removed. With this object he wrote the following letter, which was delivered to the Magistrates by Mr. Patrick Chalmers, Sheriff-Clerk of Aberdeenshire. "Charles R. —Trustie and well-beloved, we greet you weel. Whereas we ar informit of some seditious convocatiounes practised among you, coming as we heir especiallie from the electioun you have latelie made of one Patrick Leslie for your provest, whome we wer

* Diary of Principal John Row, 26.

informit to have wrongit your trust in his careage at our late parliament and thairfoir to have deserved no sueh chairge, and in regaird we have alwayes formerlie found you forward for our service and accordinglie have dispensed our favour to you in quhat micht concern your liberties and priviledges. Now, being cairfull of that which may concern our service and the peace and weell of that our citie, in redressing of the abuses past and preventing the lyke inconvenience, it is our pleasur for that effect that you remove the said Patrik Leslie from being your provest, and in his place we wish you to mak choice of Sir Paull Mengzes who was formerlie in that chairge. So not doubting of the performance of this our pleasur we bid you farewell. Frome our Court at Whitehall the 10th December 1634." This letter was submitted to a meeting of the Council held on 14th January following, who without a dissenting voice agreed to do as the King commanded. So pleased was Charles with their ready obedience that he took the pains to send the Council "a gratious and favourable missive," in which he commended them for their good affection to his service, and likewise made promise that the signature for their new charter should have immediate attention.*

14TH JANUARY, 1635.

69. SIR PAUL MENZIES OF KINMUNDY

(Council Reg., LII., 198).

1635.

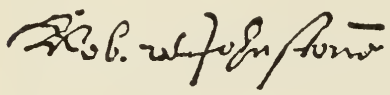
LXXI. **Robert Johnston of Crimond**

(Council Reg., LII., 224).

Provost Robert Johnston was the eldest son of George Johnston of Crimond, by his wife Agnes Johnston, and was received as a Guild brother of the burgh on 5th September, 1604. He married Agnes, a sister of John Johnston of that Ilk, by whom

* Council Reg., LII., 198, 203.

he had several children, among others George his eldest son, admitted a burgess on 14th August, 1619; William, admitted a Guild brother in August, 1638; James, baptised, 25th August, 1614; and Thomas, baptised 20th October, 1618. William, the second son, became afterwards a lieutenant-colonel in the Royalist army, and one of the most efficient officers which the King's cause had in the north, as Spalding says — "Generall Johnstoun, for his wit and policie, was honoured amongst them all, and had the first place at all thair meittingis." It is understood that this gallant officer learned the art of war while serving as a volunteer in the army of Gustavus Adolphus.*



The action of the King in removing Leslie from the provostship, although agreed to without dissent, had caused great displeasure to a powerful party both in the Council and outside of it; and at the Michaelmas election of 1635 Leslie would have been again elected had not Charles taken measures to prevent the election being made.

His first action was a letter written by the Lord Chancellor to the Council requiring them in His Majesty's name, that they should not elect Leslie, nor yet suffer him to have a voice in the Council. On the day of the annual election, while the proceedings were going on, there entered the Council Chamber the Bishop of Aberdeen, along with Thomas Crombie, the Sheriff, for a witness, and desired the Council to stop further proceedings till His Majesty and the Privy Council should be consulted. The majority of the Council did not, however, hesitate to show the Bishop that they did not half like this interference on his part, nor were they inclined to stand tamely by and see their liberties thus infringed. A majority of the Council being determined to go on with the election, the Bishop, on his authority as a Privy Councillor, dissolved the meeting. A

* Earldom of the Garioch, 251.

second meeting was held a fortnight later, viz., on the 7th October, by virtue of a warrant from the Privy Council, and at this meeting Leslie attended in his capacity of a Councillor, prepared to give his vote as such. The letter of the Chancellor, however, was distinct that Leslie was to be debarred from any voice in the Council, and the Provost, Sir Paul Menzies, and his party appeared determined that he should not do so, while Leslie, on the other hand, having obtained possession of one of the voting lists, proceeded to record his vote. A disgraceful scene now ensued, Leslie being pursued from place to place in the endeavour to snatch from him the voting paper, and it was not till over three hours had elapsed that his party accepted defeat, and left the Council Chamber in a body. The remnant members thereafter elected Johnston to the office of provost for the ensuing year, but by a Decree of the Privy Council, dated 26th January, the election was declared void, in respect that it had not been carried out in a fair and peaceable manner, as became dutiful and good subjects. At a meeting of the Council held on the 6th February this Decree was laid before them, together with the recommendation that Alexander Jaffray should be elected to the civic chair, and this was accordingly done.*

The Provost's arms, as they appear on his seal, were a bend, between a boar's head erased in chief and three cross crosslets fitchée in base, on a chief three cushions.†

6th February, 1635-1636.

LXXII. Alexander Jaffray of Kingswells

(Council Reg., LII., 236, 296).

The Jaffrays do not appear to have had any hold in Aberdeen until the beginning of the sixteenth century, when Robert Jaffray was admitted a burgess, and though we have no direct proof, he may have been the first of the family who settled here.

* Council Reg., LII., 217, 219, 235. † Laing's Seals, II., 92.

The Provost's grandfather was Alexander Jaffray, who, on 5th October, 1534, was admitted a burgess of the baker craft, and this lowly origin of the family was the occasion, as we shall find, for many thinking that the dignity of the provostship had suffered when it was placed in Jaffray's hands. The baker burgess died about 1569, and his two sons, Alexander and Robert, were then infeft in some property, including a net's fishing on the river Dee. The elder son was the father of the Provost, and first proprietor of Kingswells, which he purchased from Robert Arthur, burgess, in May, 1579. This Alexander Jaffray was for a long time one of the Magistrates, and, by his wife Christian Burnett, the father of at least four sons — Alexander, the Provost, David, Andrew, and James, besides a daughter Marjorie. The Baillie died in January, 1627, his wife having died several years previous, viz., in July, 1619.

Provost Jaffray was baptised on 11th October, 1584, and married, in 1611, Magdalen Erskine, a daughter of the laird of Pittodrie, by whom he had fifteen of a family, prominent among whom were his eldest sons Alexander and John, both afterwards occupants of the civic chair. The other members of the family, many of whom died in infancy, were Patrick, born 1616; Cristane, 1618; a son, 1619; Marjorie, 1620; Thomas, 1622; Jean, 1624; William, 1628; Maria, 1629; Annas, 1630; Barbara, 1632; Magdalen, 1633; Marjorie, 1635; and James, 1637. The Provost died in January, 1645, and was interred on the 12th of that month in S. Nicholas Churchyard beside his wife who had predeceased him in September, 1640.

The armorial coat of the Provost is prominent among some of the fine carved work preserved in the Greyfriars Church, and shows, paly of six; on a fess three mullets.

Regarding his election in 1636, Spalding says, "Mony lichtleit both the man and the electioun," but we are to remember that the

Commissary Clerk's opinion of men was often dependent on the side which they took as between the King and the Parliament; and in this respect we can hardly look for an impartial sketch of Jaffray, since he has told us that he was "ane rigorouss Covenanter," being among the first to subscribe the Covenant in 1638. It is true Spalding gives another reason for thinking lightly of the man, in that he was not, as he says, one of the old blood of the town, but the "oy of ane baxter." It occurred to some of those desirous of reminding the Provost of his parentage to play a practical joke upon him; and so, on the first Sunday after the election, there was placed in the Provost's seat in the church a baken pie, and although this was repeated several times, we are told he "miskenit all and never querrellit the samen." His action in this matter showed the common sense of the man in a marked degree, and fully justified the choice of the Privy Council in selecting him for the position of provost at a time when the feeling was so bitter between certain sections of the community.

During the period of his provostship, Jaffray was chiefly instrumental in establishing a Correction House in Aberdeen on the model of similar institutions erected in England. In October of 1636 two brothers of the name of Brastounes, Englishmen, came from Edinburgh, on the magistrates' invitation, to explain the method of working the institution and advising with them as to the best kind of building to erect for their purpose. The cost of establishing the institution, however, was a serious matter, and after some negotiation, it was agreed to form a company, who were to carry on the concern, while the magistrates agreed to tax the community to the extent of two thousand merks, to enable them to purchase a tenement, and furnish it with things necessary for carrying on the manufacture of "bredcloath, carseyis, seyis, and other manufactoris." In consideration of the contribution already referred to, the magistrates had the power to send to the Correction House "all vagabonds, strong and sturdie beggares, idle and maisterles persones, strong in bodie and habill to work,

servants disobedient to maistris, children disobedient to parentis, leud leivars, pyikers, common scoldis, and uncorrigible harlottis not amending to the discipline of the kirk." The obligation on the partners of the Correction House was to receive all such persons and to keep them at work within the house until relieved by an order from the magistrates.

1637.

71. ROBERT JOHNSTON of Crimond

(Council Reg., LII., 352).

While the Book of Canons and the Liturgy or Service Book had been accepted in Aberdeen without the slightest disturbance, it was not so in other parts of the country, especially in Edinburgh, where the introduction of the service had caused a commotion little short of a riot. By the beginning of 1638 the opposition had assumed a definite shape, and in the month of March the lairds of Dun, Morphy, and Leys approached the Council as a deputation from the disaffected party to ask their concurrence and active assistance in resisting the new order of things. With a Council strongly in favour of the King, they came little speed with their mission, "bot wes rejectit be Abirdein, constantly abyding be the King." For their action at this time Charles wrote the Council a letter of thanks, in which he says the testimony of their affection for him "is the more considerable in regaird of the neglect of otheris." A larger and much more influential deputation arrived in the burgh on the 20th July, and the magistrates, according to custom, waited on them with a "cup of Bon-Accord," which they saw fit to refuse "so disdancfullie whereof the like was never done to Aberdeen in no man's memorie." As might naturally be expected, the "Apostles of the Covenant" had but a small measure of success, for not only did the Council refuse to sign any bond or covenant, but they did everything they could to prevent the Commissioners from appealing to the people on the following Sunday by shut-

ting every pulpit against them. Whatever may have been the faults of Charles, he certainly cannot be taxed with being neglectful of his adherents at this time, for a month had scarcely elapsed before the Council had a second letter of thanks, in which the King specially commends them for "hindering some stranger ministeris frome preaching in any of their churches," and promising to be not unmindful of anything that may concern the good of the burgh.

Although the Council and citizens as a whole had refused to be bound by the Covenant, there were some notable exceptions, such as Provost Patrick Leslie, his brother John, and Provost Alexander Jaffray, with several of the ministers in the country charges in the neighbourhood of the burgh.

1638.

72. ALEXANDER JAFFRAY of Kingswells

(Council Reg., LII., 403).

On the 26th September, the day of the election, Provost Robert Johnston submitted a letter from His Majesty, in which, after referring to the Council's past endeavours in his service, he asks them "to carry themselves as they have done for the furthering of our service." The drift of this letter was evident, and expression was given to the spirit of it when the Provost proposed that the name of no one who had signed the Covenant should be put on the lists from which the Council was to be elected. Those in favour of this course appear to have been in a considerable minority, as Jaffray was elected provost, notwithstanding the fact that he had been among the foremost to subscribe the Covenant. About a fortnight after the election, the Council, at the special request of the Privy Council, agreed to subscribe the Confession of Faith, dated the 2nd March, 1580, together with the "General Band" for the maintenance of the true religion and defence of the King's person, dated in 1589.

In subscribing this document, the Provost, as well as several of the Council, took care to explain that they did so "as it doth condemne and abjure all Popish erroris, idolatry, and superstitioun repugnant to God's holy Word, and that they understand not Perth articles nor Episcopall government to be abjured in it, and also without prejudice of sound and laudable discipline authorysed and approven by the kirk and lawes of the kingdome."

With the beginning of 1639, it was evident to the burgesses that the Estates meant mischief towards them for the manner they stood by the King and for their refusal to sign the Covenant as a body. An attempt was made to fortify the town, but nothing of practical utility was accomplished by the end of March, when Montrose, with nine thousand troops, peaceably occupied the town. Within ten days, those of the burgesses who had not fled the burgh had subscribed the Covenant, and Montrose withdrew his troops southward, carrying with him the Marquis of Huntly, who had fallen into his hands. For the next two months the town was alternately in the hands of one party or the other, but no serious disturbance actually took place until the month of June, when the Viscount Aboyne, with the Royalist forces, resolved to make the burgh their headquarters, from whence they might make attacks on the Covenanting forces under Montrose and Marischal. A slight skirmish between the contending armies took place on the 14th at Megray Hill, near Stonehaven, and the Royalist army retreated on the Bridge of Dee, which was securely barricaded and defended. Montrose, following up his advantage, attacked the bridge on the 18th, and by the stratagem of pretending to cross the river above the bridge, took it the following day, utterly routing Aboyne's force and marching triumphantly into the burgh, which on this occasion ran a considerable risk of being burned had Montrose carried out his commission from the Tables.

During the occupancy of the burgh by the army of Aboyne it would appear that Jaffray's loyalty was suspected, for on the 10th June at a Head Court of all the inhabitants, both frec and

unfree, Robert Johnston, whose Royalist proclivities were beyond question, demanded if anyone present had accusation, challenge, or grievance to make against the present provost, or any reason to suspect him of any disloyalty or miscarriage to the hindrance of His Majesty's service. The certificate granted by the unanimous voice of the meeting shows clearly that Jaffray must have fulfilled the duties of his trying position in a remarkable manner, seeing that it was the opposite party who gave him the following testimonial:—"Thay all in ane voice, but ony oppositioun or contradictioun, answered that they had no point of disloyaltie or miscarriage to say against him, or any brak of duetie in his office to lay to his chairge, but be the contriar, they give him thair approbatioun and applause that he has dischairgit and acquytted himselff in his said office most dutifullie and honestlie, as one loyal and gude subject to his maiestie, and as a most cairfull and painefull magistratt for the weill and gude of the toune." The Peace of Berwick gave the burgesses a short breathing space, and that not before time, seeing that in the short time of six months the burgh had incurred a debt of over twelve thousand pounds, without the likelihood of recovering any part of it. A deputation was, indeed, sent to Charles for the purpose of interesting him towards getting a part of this debt repaid, but, as was to be expected, the Monarch had little beyond his sympathy to give.

1639-40.

70. Sir PATRICK LESLIE of Iden

(Council Reg., LII., 495, 577).

Leslie, after having been deposed from the provostship in January of 1635, seems to have retired from the Council for a short period; indeed, he petitioned the Privy Council that if he should be elected a councillor they would grant him their authority to refuse acceptance for the reason, that he had been "no litle caus of greif and displeasour this long tyme bygaine for

his Majesties offence tane aganes him.* The King, however, was not now so great a factor in burgh affairs, and Leslie entered the Council again in 1639, and at the Michaelmas election of this year he was elected to the chair. In the early part of 1640, the town was again in the hands of the military, under the leadership of General Robert Monro, when great excesses were committed, and the burgesses plundered of their goods, while many were impressed for service in the army operating against England.

1641.

72. ALEXANDER JAFFRAY of Kingswells

(Council Reg., LII., 670).

The game of golf appears to have been a favourite pastime at this time, for it was worth the trouble of one John Dickson to remove from Leith to the burgh, where he obtained licence and tolerance to make "gouff" balls, in respect that there was no such tradesman within the burgh. Jaffray, during the period intervening between 1638 and his election in 1641 had been on several occasions chosen Commissioner to represent the burgh in Parliament, at the Convention of Royal Burghs, and in the Assembly of the Church.

1642-43.

70. Sir PATRICK LESLIE of Iden

(Council Reg., LII., 755, 806).

During this period of office the Provost's brother, John, died on 17th January, 1643. He had been a magistrate for several years, and his death, which took place after a few days' illness, was the occasion of great grief to the town, he being, according to Spalding, "better lovit nor his brother."

In the opening months of 1644 the burgh had great trouble

* Spalding's Troubles, I., 92.

with the Gordons, and matters came to such a pass that there was a strict watch set every evening, while four pieces of ordnance were set up on the "calsey" for defence in case of attack. Notwithstanding these precautions, in the early morning of the 19th March, immediately after the watch had been removed, there entered the town the young laird of Drum, the lairds of Haddo, Gight, Tippertie, along with some three score horsemen, and, in despite of the inhabitants, who, it is true, made no great resistance, they carried off Provost Patrick Leslie, Mr. Robert Farquhar, Baillie Alexander Jaffray, and his brother, John Jaffray, then Dean of Guild. The raid was made according to the direct instructions of the Marquis of Huntly, and the prisoners were taken from Aberdeen to Strathbogie, from whence they were sent to the Castle of Auchindoun, where they were kept close prisoners for five weeks, until Argyle's march westwards made it prudent for the Gordons that their prisoners should be set at liberty. The author of the "Genealogy of the Earls of Sutherland" says "these persons were taken upon dyvers considerations—the Provost was taken for alleged being active in informing the State against the Marquis of Huntly. Mr. Robert Farquhar was taken for being imployed by the publick and to squies some money from him, wherein they could not prevail, and the baillie and the Dean of Gill (brethren called Jaffrays) were taken upon a private former quarrel betwixt them and the laird of Haddo." The Council, as was natural, were highly indignant at the outrage that had been committed, and the same day they appointed Commissioners to the Committee of Estates and to the Earl Marischal to lay the matter before them and to obtain redress.

About the beginning of May the town began to fill up with the soldiers of the Covenant, and from this date till September it was continuously held by them. Montrose, who had by this time changed sides in the great civil war, had, on the 1st September, defeated the Covenanting forces at Tippermuir, after which he resolved to strike at Aberdeen, the headquarters of his enemy

in the north. Refusing to be again delayed at the Bridge of Dee, and thinking rightly that it might not be so easily won as in 1639, he crossed the river at Drum, marched down the north side, and encamped at the two-mile cross on the rising ground above the present mansion-house of Norwood. The inhabitants, who five years earlier would have welcomed him gladly had his mission been then what it was now, to support the authority of the King, had, however, been coerced by hardships and pecuniary losses to embrace the Covenant, and were now disappointed to find that they had still the great Marquis as their enemy. Some feeling for the peculiar position in which the burgesses found themselves must have struck Montrose, for in a characteristic letter he gave them the chance to render up the town for His Majesty's service or else be prepared to defend it to the death. Whatever may have been the desire of the Council, they were entirely over-ruled by the military leaders, who assembled with them in Alexander Findlater's house near the Bow Bridge in the Green. The two armies came into conflict beside the Justice Mills on the 13th September, about 11 o'clock, and, although occupying by far the worst situation, Montrose so handled his forces, far inferior in numbers to his enemies, that in about two hours' time the Covenanting forces were utterly routed. A great measure of the success which attended Montrose on this occasion was owing undoubtedly to the indifferent generalship displayed by the leaders of the opposing force.* An entry in the Council Register gives a very graphic picture of the fight and the subsequent rout:—"Thair wes littill slauchter in the fight, bot horribill wes the slauchter in the flight fleing bak to the toune, whiche wes our toune's menis distruction; whairas if thay had fled and not cum neir the toune thay mich have bein in better securitie: but being commandit be Patrick Leslie provest to tak the toune thay war vndone, yet himself and the pryme covenanteris being on horseback wan saiflie them selffis away." The

* Gardiner's Civil War, II., 145.

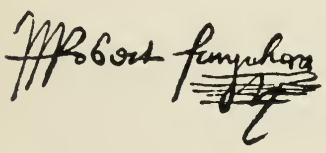
burgh on this occasion paid heavily for their adhesion to the Covenanting party; for, besides great loss through the plundering of the Irish soldiers, there were over 150 burgesses killed, including several members of the Council, and two of the burgh officers, so that the entry in one of the Registers, written evidently within a few days of the fight, truly says that "it is to be remembirt, but nevir without regrait the great and heavie prejudice and lose quhilk this burghe did sustaine by the cruell and bloody feicht quhiche was fochtin betwixt the Crabstane and the Justice Mylnes vpon the threthin day of September."

1644.

LXXIII. Sir Robert Farquhar of Mounie

(Council Reg., LIII., 10).

Provost Farquhar is one of the prominent figures in the history of the stirring events of the civil war, for besides his connection with the Council he held the important post of collector of the cess or taxation leviable in the north of Scotland. In the struggle of parties he sided, although not taking a very active part, with the Covenanting party, and yet this did not militate against him securing the honour of knighthood from Charles II. in 1651, along with Patrick Leslie of Iden. Farquhar acquired the estate of Mounie, in the parish of Daviot, from Patrick Urquhart, sometime during 1636-7, and the lands were soon afterwards erected into a barony, of which he received a charter of confirmation in 1648.



Provost Farquhar married Elizabeth Patrie, the widow of Thomas Buck of Grandholm, by whom he had issue three daughters, all of whom married and had children, as at his death having no son, it was said he left "many oyes with his three

daughters."* One of the Provost's daughters, Elizabeth, married Sir Ludovick Gordon, the second baronet of Gordonstoun. Another daughter was Elspet, baptised on 2nd November, 1624, and there was a son George, baptised 15th March, 1621, who appears to have died in infancy. The Provost's widow died at Aberdeen on the 23rd November, 1665, and was buried in the old Church of S. Nicholas three days later, while the Provost survived her only about five weeks, having died on the 1st day of January, 1666, aged about 80 years. He was interred on the 4th of the month in the same grave as his wife, in S. Nicholas Church. The Provost's funeral was evidently conducted with due observance of the customs of the time, for receipts are still extant from Thomas Davidson, the master of the Music School, acknowledging the payment to him of "two pund auchteine shillings" for singing at "umquill Sir Robert Farquhar of Mouny his lyk," from John Cormack, schoolmaster, for two rex dollars for "reading at Sir Robert Farcher and his Lady their lyk-wakes, as the custom is in this place," while the third receipt is an acknowledgment from James Home, kirk officer, of his fee for "tolling the kirk belles of Aberdene at the buriell of Sir Robert Farquhar of Mouney."†

The Provost, who was reputed to be one of the wealthiest men in Scotland, seems to have dealt as a wholesale merchant in the purchase and sale of victuals, and in this connection often had the disposal of property of a different nature from that immediately connected with his business. It was a transaction connected with his trade which had for its immediate result the passing of the paternal lands of the Barons of Wardis out of the family.‡ His wealth enabled him on many occasions to do a service to his fellow-burgesses by relieving them of charges which would have fallen heavily on the common purse. One such example of his generosity is thus recorded when on

* Diary of John Row, 23. † Social Life in Moray, 2nd Series, 51.
‡ Earldom of the Garioch, 252.

the 23rd September, 1640, the Magistrates expressed the sense of their obligation to him "becaus he has relieved the Toun of a burdine be houlding a frie hous to Major-General Monro dureing the haill tyme of his remaining in Aberdene, the Toun being chairgit and lyabill to have furnisht spycereis, salt, weshell-naiprie, bedding, fyir, and sundry uther houshald stuff for furnisheing his hous." As a further evidence of his great wealth, it may be stated that he furnished on various occasions meal and other provisions to the army until he became a State creditor to the large sum of £180,859 Scots, and for payment of this debt the Estates agreed to allow him the third of all the fines imposed on delinquents north of the Tay.* For dealing with the large sums of money passing through his hands in his official position as collector, his accounts, it would appear, required sometimes the aid of a friendly voice to explain matters, and an amusing story is told of how on one occasion, by the gift of a velvet cloak, he enlisted the good services of Andrew Cant, and obtained letters from him to the leaders in Edinburgh which secured an easy audit of the collector's accounts.

Montrose, after his victory at the Justice Mills, was unable to take any advantage of it, and within a few days had to remove northwards owing to the approach of Argyle with a far superior force. On the latter entering the town, the adherents of the Covenant came back from the country places to which they had fled, and, at the election on the 25th September, they had it all their own way again. On more than one occasion, however, during the next twelve months, Montrose, in his rapid marches and counter-marches, came within a few miles of the burgh, but on every occasion commissioners were sent out to interview him and offer supplies, on the understanding that the army was on no account to come within the burgh. We can judge of the panic which this commander with his Irish levies had on the burgesses, when we read in the Council Register that

* Acts of Parliament, VI., 170.

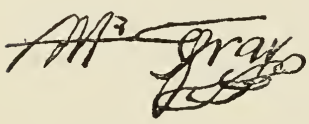
no meeting of the Council was held from the 7th March till the 14th May, "in respect that Montroise and his army wer in thir feildis, and daylie repairing to this burghe."

1645-6.

LXXIV. Thomas Gray of Mamewlay

(Council Reg., LIII., 56, 85).

Provost Thomas Gray was the second son of Patrick Gray, burgess, and was himself admitted a Guild brother on the 13th January, 1604. His father, at his death, in 1623, mortified a hundred merks to the Hospital of the burgh to be employed for behoof of the beidmen of the said Hospital. The Provost's name also appears in the list of the town's benefactors, he having by deed dated 20th May, 1633, given two rigs of land in Futtie towards the support of a minister there, and in the following year he made over to S. Nicholas Church "ane great brazen hearse" (chandelier) for the decoration of the parish kirk of the burgh. For some time prior to his election as provost, Gray had been a member of the Council, and had served the community for several years as one of the magistrates, while in 1639 he acted as one of the Commissioners who appeared before Charles at Berwick to urge on that unfortunate monarch the necessity of doing something towards recouping the burgh* for its losses in His Majesty's service.



The Provost was married to Isobel Farquhar, daughter of John Farquhar of Noram, and a niece of Sir Robert Farquhar of Mounie. The issue of this marriage was Gilbert, baptised 7th March, 1633, afterwards provost; Elspet, baptised 2nd June, 1634; Robert, baptised 24th December, 1635, and whose name appears as one of the ensign bearers at the rejoicings for the

* Council Reg., LII., 480, 486.

Restoration in 1660; William, baptised 17th April, 1638; Thomas, baptised 10th July, 1639; John, baptised 13th March, 1641; William, baptised 4th October, 1642; Thomas, baptised 20th December, 1644, appointed librarian of Marischal College, 9th June, 1669; Elspet, baptised 9th March, 1646; Isobel, baptised 17th March, 1650; Marie, baptised 30th December, 1652; Elspet, baptised 2nd July, 1654; and Alexander, baptised 28th February, 1656. Gray was elected provost at Michaelmas, 1645, and from the fact that Viscount Aboyne then held the town for the King, the Provost, if not a Royalist, was a much more moderate man than any of the others who were likely to be elected, if no interference in the election had taken place.

The uncertain fortune of war soon reversed matters, and the town was once more in the hands of the Parliamentary party, but no attempt seems to have been made to remove Gray from the provostship. The town at this period suffered incalculable loss from the continual plundering which went on by the soldiers of both parties, who were at one in thinking the poor burgesses fair game. At the Michaelmas election of 1646, there seems to have been some undue influence or pressure brought to bear, as by an Act of the Estates, dated 6th February, 1647, the whole election was set aside. The reason given was that "they find that in regaird of some excommunicat persones and others of the rebellis being in armes within the toun immedietlie befoir and about the tyme of thair electioun, and of their intermedling theirin, the election has not been carried on with that freedome quhilk is allowed be the law and vsuall in lyke caices, and therfoir declares and decernes the said election to have bein and to be enforced, vnfree, and illegal." For the purpose, therefore, of doing away with the scandal, so the Act says, the Estates took it upon themselves to nominate a Council, and gave directions for the persons so nominated to meet and elect office-bearers, which was accordingly done on 24th February, 1647.

Provost Gray died in May, 1658, and on the 18th of that month was interred within the Church of S. Nicholas.

24th February, 1647—Mich., 1647.

70. Sir PATRICK LESLIE of Iden

(Council Reg., LIII., 107, 135).

At the meeting held on the 24th February, the Council nominated by the Estates elected Leslie provost, and he was re-elected again at the Michaelmas meeting in September following. During the spring of 1647, precautions were taken to ward off the pestilence or plague which had made its appearance at Bervie, and the usual watches were set at the Bridge of Dee, the Blockhouse and the Crabstane, while strict orders were at the same time given regarding strangers and stranger beggars within the burgh. The burgesses were likewise specially prohibited from attending the Rude fair at Ellon, while trade or traffic with Torry was ordered to be restricted as much as possible. The inhabitants of that burgh of barony were not to cross the river without special permission given and obtained from John Anderson in Torry. This was about the utmost that could be suggested to ward off this terrible disease, and, as was to be expected, the measures fell far short of the needs of the case, for the "seikness" appeared in the burgh, and spread with alarming rapidity. So much was this the case that from the month of May till August there was no meeting of the Council, while the election meeting at Michaelmas, 1647, was held at Gilcomston, the only recorded instance where a municipal election was held outwith the burgh limits. The disease increasing in virulence, it was deemed prudent to remove all infected persons out of the town, and huts were accordingly erected for their reception at the Links and Woolmanhill, while strong military guards prevented any intercourse taking place with those inside the burgh. The total number of persons who are supposed to have died of the disease in this the greatest and last visitation of the plague, is estimated at 1,600, and when it is borne in mind that in 1647 the population of the burgh was in all probability

under 8,000, this means that the mortality was twenty per cent., or that one-fifth of the population, died from this terrible disease. During recent operations on the Links large quantities of human bones were discovered, the remains in all probability of those who died and were buried there during this plague.

1648.

74. THOMAS GRAY OF MAMEWLAY

(Council Reg., LIII., 184, 191).

During the latter half of 1648 an agreement was come to between Charles and a party in Scotland, by which the King bound himself to recognise Presbyterianism, while the latter promised to raise a force for His Majesty's relief. To this compact, known as the "Engagement," several prominent citizens seem to have been privy, although an endeavour was made to keep the matter secret.

On the 11th November the Council convened for the purpose of unanimously disclaiming "the lait unlawful ingaidgment," and for the trial of their common clerk, Mr. John Chalmer, who though denying he took any action in the matter, yet voluntarily resigned his clerkship about a week later. Previous to this date, however, there had been presented to the Council by Alexander Jaffray a letter from Chancellor Loudon objecting to the election at Michaelmas as having been made without due regard as to the parties elected having had dealings in connection with the "Engagement." By the Chancellor's order a second election was held on 8th November, when Gray was again chosen to the office of provost.

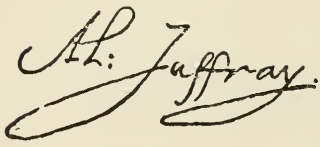
1649.

LXXV. Alexander Jaffray of Kingswells

(Council Reg., LIII., 232).

Alexander Jaffray, third of Kingswells, was the eldest son of Provost Alexander Jaffray (72), by his wife, Magdalen Erskine, and was born in Aberdeen in June, 1614. He is the only provost,

so far as known, who has left us a record of his life, and this he has fully done in an elaborate diary, printed with a memoir by John Barclay in 1833. This diary contains a minute account of his religious experience, very uninteresting reading for the most part, and one regrets that the Provost, with his intimate knowledge and connection with the chief political events of his time, did not give us some insight into the inner councils of the period. His early education, we learn, was obtained partly at the Grammar School and partly at the school of Banchory, and, at the age of seventeen, he entered Marischal College in 1631, but left it the following year. We have Jaffray's own authority for saying that his education did not count for much, and this he attributes to the fact that he had too much liberty granted him, and that he was unfortunate in his teachers, of whom he says that they were unfit for training up of youths. This judgment on Jaffray's part was made after many years' experience in the larger school of the world, and is not to be taken as the wisdom of the unthinking lad of eighteen. On the 30th April, 1632, while yet scarcely eighteen years of age, Jaffray married Jean Dun, a daughter of Principal Patrick Dun, of Marischal College, and within a few days after was sent to Edinburgh, where he resided with Mr. Robert Burnett, advocate, and in whose household he not only learnt "some things of the law and practice of the Tolbooth, but some things as to the practice of holiness and charity." His stay in Edinburgh was brief, for he visited London, and was absent some time travelling in France, and in this journey there is reason to believe he was accompanied by the painter Jamesone, whose influence on the young man could have had only one effect, viz., to broaden his views and direct his thoughts to everything that was bright and ennobling in life. During this tour young Jaffray nearly lost his life, for on one occasion he was attacked in the streets of Paris by a drunken



soldier, and received a wound in his back and left hand. He finally returned home and took up house on his own account at Whitsunday, 1636, but his ignorance of all domestic duties was such that in less that two years he found himself in straitened circumstances. The curious will find in the Kirk-Session Records, under date 27th May, 1638, an entry which must apply to the future provost, and which, perhaps, more than anything else could do, shows what little change had as yet come over the youth who was yet to shine out as a leading light among the Society of Friends.

Jaffray, however much he disagreed with his father on many things, was at one with him in supporting the Covenant, and from 1638 onwards he took a most prominent part in the counsels of that party. In the discharge of his duties as a magistrate he on one occasion committed to prison a servant of Sir John Gordon of Haddo, who took the matter as a personal affront, and in consequence caused Jaffray a great amount of trouble. Being present with his brother John at Kintore shortly after the event referred to, he was attacked by Gordon and wounded in the head, but escaped capture, although hotly pursued to the town by Haddo, who indeed entered and rode round the cross to show his contempt for the magistrates' authority. For this outrage Jaffray sought redress at the hands of the Privy Council, who imposed a fine on Sir John Gordon of 20,000 merks, of which one-third was to be received by Jaffray. The attempt to levy this fine only tended to make matters worse, and when Huntly's party, headed by the young laird of Drum, invaded the burgh in the early morning of the 19th March, 1644, Haddo, who was one of the party, revenged himself by carrying off both brothers as prisoners to Strathbogie and afterwards to Auchindoun. The only serious result of this escapade was that Jaffray's wife, who was lying ill, received such a shock that she died within a day or two, her interment taking place on the 24th of March. Jean Dun, during her twelve years of married life, became the mother of ten children, seven sons and

three daughters, all of whom appear to have been weakly, as none reached the years of maturity, the only child who survived her being Alexander, baptised 17th October, 1641. Jaffray was kept prisoner at Auchindoun till the month of May, when he received his liberty, along with his fellow-prisoners, and immediately thereafter he went to Argyle's camp, who was besieging Haddo's House of Kelly. On the rendering of the castle he had an interview with Haddo, which, from Jaffray's own account, must have been a stormy one.

At the battle of the Justice Mills in 1644 Jaffray was present, and narrowly escaped the "Irishes," being, as he tells us, "evilly horsed, yet by Providence escaped, carrying off a pair of colours which he took from a soldier who was casting the same from him." For some time after this, while the country was held by the Royalist forces, Jaffray, along with a number of the Covenanting ministry, found an asylum in Dunnottar Castle, which was held by the Earl Marischal. During an excursion across country to Crathes, accompanied among others by Andrew Cant, the whole party was surprised by the young laird of Harthill, and carried prisoners to Pitcaple, where they were kept closely warded for over six weeks, and only obtained their release by a clever stratagem that placed the castle in their hands. They were driven to great straits to retain possession of the castle, but in this they were ultimately successful, and on leaving they committed Pitcaple to the flames.

In 1647, the Provost married for his second wife, Sarah, a daughter of the well-known divine, Andrew Cant, and by this marriage there were born eight children, nearly all of whom died in infancy. The eldest, Andrew, baptised 11th August, 1650, succeeded to Kingswells. Besides taking a share in local matters, Jaffray took an active interest in Parliamentary matters, and on several occasions acted as Commissioner for the burgh. In 1649 he was appointed one of the Commissioners to negotiate with Charles II. as to the restoration of the Monarchy, and though nothing definite was arrived at then, he was reappointed the

following year, and in his letters from The Hague narrating the negotiations he tells us of his scruples of conscience regarding the whole matter. "We did sinfully," Jaffray says, "both entangle the nation and ourselves, and that poor young prince; making him sign and swear a Covenant which we knew he hated in his heart:—where, I must confess, to my apprehension our sin was more than his. I had so clear convictions of this that I spoke of it to the King myself, desiring him not to subscribe the Covenant, if in his conscience he was not satisfied." The King, however, having given his nominal consent at least to the Covenant, Jaffray accompanied him to this country and fought for him at the Battle of Dunbar, where he had the ill-luck not only to be seriously wounded, but taken prisoner, and conveyed into England. A nominal confinement of several months took place, during which he was kindly treated by Cromwell, and where, from the conversations he had with several prominent Independents, he came to see the errors and shortcomings of Presbyterianism, and gave in his adhesion to the former body. From this standpoint it was only one step to the ranks of the Millenarians or Fifth Monarchy men, whose belief was in the immediate personal appearance of Christ. Jaffray, in his own day as now, has been charged with having had ulterior views in the change of his religious tenets; but notwithstanding the coincidence of the alteration in his religion with his political advancement, there is no reason to doubt that his convictions were honest and sincere. With the advanced views which he now held, and as one convinced that the cause of Monarchy was doomed, the Provost became a great favourite with Cromwell, who in 1652 appointed him Director of the Chancery in Scotland, while he was also one of the five Scotch Commissioners who were members of the Parliament known as "The Praise God Barebones." When that assembly was forcibly dissolved by Cromwell the Provost was one of the small band who waited until forcibly ejected by Colonel Goffe's soldiers, yet his independent action on this occasion did not forfeit to him Cromwell's friendship,

who by new favours tried to bind Jaffray more securely to his service. These favours consisted in the endeavour to persuade Jaffray to accept a judgeship in the Court of Session, which he steadfastly refused; and the granting of a warrant for payment of the sum of £1,500, chiefly outlays connected with the mission of the Provost and his colleagues to Holland anent the restoration of Charles II. Jaffray now removed his household to Edinburgh, where his duties in connection with his Directorship of the Chancery occupied his attention. At the Restoration, he failed or refused to subscribe the public bond, and on 20th September, 1660, was imprisoned in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, but having satisfied himself within a few days that there was nothing compromising in the required bond, he expressed himself willing to sign. To this request, however, no answer was returned, and it was not till January of the following year that he was released, and then only on his finding caution to the extent of 20,000 pounds not to remove out of Edinburgh until permission was received from Parliament.* Jaffray's release may have also been hastened owing to the state of his health; for in one of his letters from the Tolbooth he complains of "being in ane Infirm and valetudinarie condition, his health much impaired and lyff endangered for want of his ordinarie helps and frie air." On his return to Aberdeen Jaffray's religious opinions underwent still another change, when he joined the Society of Friends; and whatever may be said as to the worldly attractions which influenced him in joining the "Fifth Monarchy" men, no such reason could be adduced for joining himself to this persecuted sect. Jaffray remained a firm friend of the Quakers, and suffered a ten months' imprisonment in Banff gaol for his opinions, in addition to enduring much persecution in his native burgh. The Provost died at Kingswells on the 7th May, 1673, aged 59 years, and was interred in the private burying-place there. His second wife, Sarah Cant,

* Acts of Parliament, VII., 13.

shortly before his death, also gave in her adherence to the Society, and died a few months after her husband.

In estimating Jaffray's character we are aided by the opinion of a contemporary,* who says he was a "wise, pious, and discreet man all his time," and that he did good service to his native town by using his influence to get a recognition and payment of the heavy debt incurred during the civil war. Jaffray's experiences in religious matters were the outcome of his idea that it was possible to live up to a higher standard of Christian profession than had hitherto been done, and it was the endeavour to fulfil this idea which led him so often to change his religious views.†

1650.

73. Sir ROBERT FARQUHAR of Mounie

(Council Reg., LIII., 279).

About the end of February or the beginning of March, 1651, Charles II. made his second visit to the burgh, when he was the guest of the town for a week, and it was on this occasion that Provost Farquhar and ex-Provost Patriek Leslie received the honour of knighthood. Charles had visited the burgh in the summer of the previous year on his way south, after his landing at Speymouth, and had been received with great demonstrations of joy; the silver keys of the city were presented to him, while the town-clerk, Mr. James Sandilands of Cotton, delivered "an eloquent and pertinent harangue." The action of the Scottish people in declaring for Charles II., his landing and subsequent coronation at Scone, naturally raised the hostility of the Commonwealth, and reprisals took place at once. The Council during the next two or three months were actively engaged in buying "yrne" cannon with the necessary ammunition for defence of the burgh. The block-house was once more repaired,

* Succinct Survey of Aberdeen.

† Cf. Introduction Scots Affairs, 47, 50, 51; Scots Magazine, Oct., 1741, Spalding's Troubles, II., 324-5.

officers appointed to the various quarters of the town, and a nightly watch set at the harbour mouth to give the alarm in case of attack. Under date 11th June, the regular day of meeting, there is an entry to the effect that no Council was held that day in respect "the Inglish schipes haid chaist in ane barque belonging to the brughe on the sandis under the Broad-hill, and the haill toun wes convenit in armes, and stayit in armes the wholl day in defence of the said barque." The enemy, however, were not likely to attack the town from this quarter, seeing that the whole country in the south had been over-run with Cromwell's troops, and on Sunday, the 7th September, the army of the Commonwealth marched into the burgh. Commissioners on behalf of the town had, previous to the entry of the soldiery, been in conference with the commanders of the army, and had obtained the promise that if there was no resistance offered on the part of the burgesses the town would not be plundered. This promise was faithfully kept, but on leaving three days later the commanders partially disarmed the burgesses, and imposed a levy of twelve thousand pounds Scots (£1,000 sterling), to be paid within eight days. The raising of such a large sum was evidently beyond the resources of the Council, and accordingly Commissioners were sent south to Dundee, where General Monck was then stationed, to endeavour to get this large fine remitted. In this mission the Commissioners were entirely successful, to the great relief of the burgesses, the only condition stipulated in remitting the fine being that the town would remain faithful to the existing Government, and commit no new "miscariadge."

1651.

75. ALEXANDER JAFFRAY of Kingswells

(Council Reg., LIII., 328).

Jaffray had now returned home from his short captivity in England an acknowledged Independent, and consequently a safe

man for the position of provost in the present state of parties. During the next twelve months Jaffray was constantly employed in negotiating matters affecting the town with Monck at Dundee, and at one time the Council instructed the Provost to stay there for some time "for forseing the good of the toun, and preventing any danger that may affect the samen." The outcome of the various communings by various commissioners sent by the Council to the commanders of the English army was that George Cullen, one of the commissioners, signed the order of the Parliament incorporating Scotland into the Commonwealth, and received in return a Bond of Protection, dated at Dalkeith, the 27th February, 1652. The commissioner also brought with him a warrant for a new election of the Council and Magistrates, and accordingly, on the 17th March, this warrant was given effect to and a new Council elected. Jaffray was not a member of this Council, as he had just accepted the Directorship of the Chancery.

17TH MARCH, 1652-54.

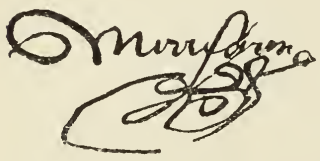
LXXVI. George Morison of Kirkhill and Pitfour

(Council Reg., LIII., 347, 361, 398, 428).

The Council thus elected chose George Morison to be provost, as one who was qualified and "weill affected for the weill and peace of this natioun."

Provost Morison was the eldest son of George Morison, burgess, by his wife, Barbara Ferguson, and was admitted a Guild brother on the 13th September, 1616. His younger brothers, William and Walter, were admitted three years later, gratis, in consideration of the good service done to the town by their mother in giving up her house for a lodging to the Duke of Lennox while he was in the town. Provost Morison was married to Jean Buchan, and their daughter Jean was married to William Forbes, a brother of Thomas Forbes, baillie. Besides the lands of Kirkhill and Pitfour, the Provost held others, at

least for a short time, for on 30th March, 1655, he had a precept of sasine from "Oliver, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, Ireland, and the domineenes thereto belonging," of the town and lands of Gilcomston, over and nether, with the mill and mill lands, together with the lands and town of Ardo and the town and lands of Jackston in the parish of Banchory-Devenick. The Provost, by his last will and testament, dated 1st May, 1658, left a sum of five hundred merks for the poor of the burgh, and a hundred merks to the hospital for decayed brethren of guild. The Provost's death occurred about five months after this date, and his remains were interred within the Church of S. Nicholas on the 24th September, 1658. His wife, who survived him, died on the 26th July, 1664, and two days later was buried beside her husband in the church. On the 12th November, 1662, George Morison of Baroch or Barra was served heir to his uncle, Provost Morison, in the town and lands of Ardo and Jackston, with the salmon fishing on the Dee.*



A curious case respecting the authority of the Council to enforce the municipal statutes made from time to time for regulating the weight and price of articles sold, took place about this time. The Council had fixed the weight of bread at fifteen ounces, but the baxter trade did not see how "they could mack ane lyff" by selling their bread at such a weight, so the trade fixed the weight at an ounce to an ounce and a half less, and turned out their bread accordingly. The magistrates at once took up the matter, and the deacon of the craft was summoned and censured, and was to be dismissed on giving his word that the craft would not so offend in time coming. The deacon, however, would neither acknowledge that any fault had been committed, nor would he give any undertaking for the future,

* Retours and Sheriff Clerk's Records.

and so by a special ordinance of the Council he was sent to prison until he should acknowledge his fault, and the "mistak of his haill traid."

No election took place at Michaelmas, 1652, and at the meeting in September, 1653, convened for the election, a letter was submitted from Colonel Lilburne, intimating that the Council of Estates thought fit that all civil officers now in office should continue without any new election. This warrant was obeyed, the office-bearers being continued as before, and this procedure was repeated at the Michaelmas meeting in the following year. At the Michaelmas meeting of 1655 no instructions were to hand, and the election was continued in the usual manner, but on the 3rd October, some nine days after the election, Provost Morison submitted a "Declaration of his Highness Counsell in Scotland," which had just reached him that day. This Declaration premises that no election had taken place, and proceeds to declare that all prohibitions as to the election of magistrates were now taken off, and the ancient privilege of election restored to those rightfully entitled to use it. After warnings against electing any person who would be dangerous to the Commonwealth, the Declaration provides that in the case of burghs which have not received timely warning as to the present measure, an election shall take place on that day fortnight. This intimation was considered by the Council equivalent to a warrant for a new election, and notwithstanding that they had already made choice of office-bearers for the ensuing year, they ordered a new election to be made on the 10th October. At this second election, Thomas Gray was chosen provost.*

1655.

74. THOMAS GRAY of Mamewlay

(Council Reg., LIII., 462).

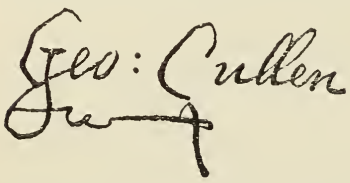
* Council Reg., LIII., 458.

1656.

LXXVII. George Cullen

(Council Reg., LIII., 501).

Provost Cullen was the second son of Thomas Cullen, at one time dean of Guild, and a grandson of Provost Alexander Cullen (60). On his admission as a Guild brother on 22nd September, 1615, he is described as the eldest son of the Dean, but this must mean the eldest son in life, as his brother Alexander, admitted two years previously, had apparently died in the interval. Both brothers were admitted burgesses while they were minors. The Provost's father died in December, 1616, and in the treasurer's accounts for 1623-4, there is a receipt of a double grassum for a half-net of the Raik fishing from George Cullen, as heir to his late father, Thomas Cullen. Provost Cullen was twice married, his first wife being Marjorie Forbes, who bore him several children, among whom were Christian, married William Gray, provost; George, baptised 1st August, 1636; Isobel, baptised 16th September, 1639, and was probably wife to Gilbert Gray, provost; Helen, married in 1662 to William Johnstone, of Foresterhill, one of the Regents of King's College, and eldest son of Dr. Arthur Johnstone; Besse, baptised 23rd March, 1642; Marie, baptised 9th April, 1645; Thomas, baptised 14th March, 1646; Robert baptised 11th April, 1650; and Anna, baptised 13th May, 1651, died April, 1661. Marjorie Forbes died in August, 1654. The Provost's second wife, whom he married in 1656, was Barbara Johnstone, a daughter of Dr. Arthur Johnstone by his second marriage with Barbara Gordon, and in this way the second Mrs. Cullen became step-mother to her brother William's wife, Helen Cullen. By his second marriage the Provost had a daughter, Barbara, baptised 30th July, 1657, but



he does not appear to have left a son; for on his death, which took place prior to 21st April, 1658, his four daughters, Christian, Isobel, Helen, and Anna were served heirs to certain fishings on the Don.

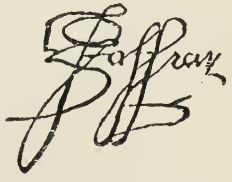
During the year in which Cullen held office, a rather novel departure was made by the Council, when, on the 29th July, 1657, they ordered the town's printer, John Forbes, to print "ane weekly diurnall" to be sold for the use of the inhabitants. Although no copy of this early news sheet is known to exist, there is evidence from the town's accounts that the "diurnall" was issued. The purchase of the Correction House for the burgh and the commencement of extensive improvements at the harbour were some of the public acts during Cullen's tenure of office.

1657-59.

LXXVIII. **John Jaffray of Dilspro**

(Council Reg., LIII., 563, 627; *LIV.*, 101).

John Jaffray was the second son of Provost Alexander Jaffray, second of Kingswells (72), and a brother of Provost Alexander Jaffray (75). Admitted a burgess of Guild along with his brother, on 13th September, 1637, he began to take an active part in burgh affairs, and, as already referred to, had experienced some of the trials incident to office during the troublesome times of the Civil War. Before being called to the civic chair, he had held the office of councillor for many years, had been dean in 1643, and one of the magistrates in 1649. The Provost was laird of the estate of Dilspro, now known as Grandholm. Jaffray, like his distinguished brother, was twice married, his first spouse being Janet Forbes, a daughter of William Forbes, burgess, by his wife Janet Hay, who died on the 14th March, 1656, some months before her husband's election



to the provostship. For his second wife Jaffray married Margaret Gordon, one of the Abergeldie family, who died on the 11th October, 1678. There was issue by both marriages, but the majority of the children died in infancy, as shown by the accounts of the Master of Kirk Works, where the interment dues of no less than six children appear as having been paid for between March, 1654, and June, 1663. The family of the first marriage consisted of four sons and seven daughters, and of the second marriage two sons and three daughters. The only children known to have survived their father were Thomas, who succeeded to Dilspro, died 19th September, 1693; and Janet, baptised 4th October, 1642, who married Robert Skene, merchant, and afterwards treasurer of the burgh. Provost Jaffray survived his second wife, having died on the 10th June, 1684. The interments of the Provost's family appear to have taken place at the west wall of S. Nicholas Churchyard, but the lair stone now lies sadly mutilated in front of the West Church. In the centre of the stone there is the remains of a finely carved shield containing the arms of Jaffray impaled with those of Forbes, and a Latin inscription of which the following is the translation :—"Here lies a most noble man, John Jaffray of Dilspro, Chief Magistrate of Aberdeen, who died 10th June, 1684; also Mr. Thomas Jaffray of Dilspro, his son, who died 19th September, 1693. Here rests in Christ, Janet Forbes, most dutiful spouse of the most illustrious John Jaffray, Provost of the Aberdeens, who, divinely endowed in mind, and virtue, and grace beyond the lot of her age and the spirit of her time, freed from the irksome trammels of mortality, gained Heaven and immortality, 14th March, 1656. Also, Dame Margaret Gordon of Abergeldie, the highly-cultured spouse of the same, who died 11th October, 1678."

During the first year of Jaffray's provostship, the Council Register contains several minutes which reflect the prevalent ideas and feelings of the time in a special degree. It was a matter within the cognisance of the Council, and a subject

worthy of "tacking to hert," that the great looseness and profanity existing among persons of all ranks was the occasion of a special infliction on the burgh, and the Council, for remedying of the matter, appointed a day of public humiliation and fasting. The drawing of an agreement between Dr. Thomas Gordon and the Trades, whereby for a fixed yearly sum he became bound to attend the individual members and supply them with medicine, was considered by the Council "dishonorabill to the facultie of medicinars," besides being intolerable in any well-governed Incorporation. At the Michaelmas election of 1658 Colonel Lilburne again interfered on behalf of the Commissioners of Estates, making a request that all civil officers in burghs should remain in office as at that date without proceeding to a new election. In the following year Jaffray wished to retire, as he had been already two years in office, but the Council would not listen to any suggestion for removing his name from the lists for the provostship, and he was accordingly elected for another term.

1660-61.

LXXIX. **Gilbert Gray of Sapbock**

(Council Reg., LIV., 217, 304).

Provost Gilbert Gray was a son of Provost Thomas Gray (74). He was baptised 7th March, 1633, and admitted a burgess of Guild on 3rd June, 1635. Gray was married to Isobell Cullen, a daughter of Provost George Cullen (77), by whom he had the following children:—Thomas, baptised 18th June, 1657; Gilbert, baptised 12th September, 1658; Marjorie, baptised 30th March, 1662; George, baptised 14th August, 1664; John, baptised 15th January, 1666; and Marjorie, baptised 15th February, 1667. A sister of the Provost's, Isabella, married Dr. James Leslie, Principal of King's College, on the 18th October, 1663, the

respective ages of the bride and bridegroom being fourteen and fifty. The young wife did not enjoy the wedded state long, having died at the early age of seventeen on 20th December, 1666.

Provost Gray died at the early age of thirty-four, on the 14th August, 1667 ; and, being then in office, his obsequies were carried out with great solemnity. The Council at a meeting held the same day expressed the sense of the duty devolving on them to attend and convey the corpse of their provost to its "interment in the most honourable and decent manner they could," for, continues this minute, he was "ane verie worthie deserveing persone, and this burgh sustaining great loss by his removeall." The Council accordingly appointed that the whole of their number should appear at the funeral in mourning, that the bells should be tolled, the Council's desk in church to be covered with black, a guard of fifty men drawn from each of the four quarters under arms, and cannon and volleys of musketry to be discharged, according to use and wont in like cases.*

Although the Restoration had been hailed with delight by all classes of the community, it was considered prudent nevertheless by Charles's advisers to see that the Michaelmas elections of 1660 were carried out in such a way that only persons whose loyalty was above question should receive office. On the ordinary day of election there was submitted a letter from Chancellor Glencairn, who after reminding the Council of the "former practisses of a feu disloyall persones who prosperit in their wickedness," asks them to elect none to any place of trust who had in any ways been disaffected to His Majesty's service since 1650. To this letter the Council resolved to conform, and to make election according to the tenor of the same. Among one of the first duties which the Provost was called upon to perform was to undertake a journey to London with a congratulatory address to

* Council Reg., LV., 33.

the King from the Council, this being the second one they had presented since his return. In February of 1661 another public ceremony was performed by the Provost, when the dismembered limb of the great Montrose was removed from the Church of S. Nicholas and handed over to Harie Graham, son to the laird of Morphie. The whole town, in their best array, attended on the magistrates and Council at the church, where the arm and hand was disinterred and placed in a crimson-lined box and handed over to Graham. A procession was then formed, and the mangled limb was conveyed with full military honours to the Town-House, where it was placed in the custody of the magistrates till preparations were completed for having it conveyed to Edinburgh. It was during Gray's term of office that James Gordon, minister of Rothiemay, presented to the Council his "meikle cairt of paper" containing a plan of the burgh and surrounding country, the first of its kind that we have any knowledge of. The Council thankfully received the plan and ordained their Dean to present a piece of silver to Gordon along with a new hat, and to buy a silk gown for his bed-fellow. This well-known map of the burgh was afterwards sent to Holland to be engraved. Gray, during his provostship, rode the outer marches of the freedom on two occasions with great state. He was, in 1663, the burgh's commissioner to the Parliament held in May of that year, and he would appear to have upheld the dignity of the town in an especial degree since he was allowed the large sum of five hundred pounds to defray *part* of his expenses.*

1662.

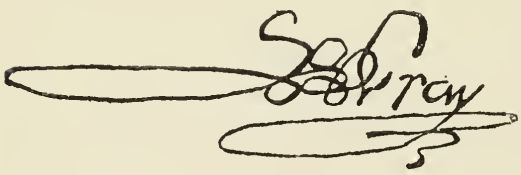
LXXX. **William Gray**

(Council Reg., LIV., 391).

Provost William Gray was the son of Baillie William Gray by his second wife, and was born in 1617. He did not occupy

* Treasurer's Accounts, 1663-4.

the civic chair for any length of time, as his death occurred quite suddenly on the last day of December, 1662. From a contemporary source we gather that he "expyred of a squinance about eight o'clock at night, having bin in good health the day before."* The Council, at a meeting held on the day of the Provost's death, agreed that the burial should be public, and "decentlie gone about." On the second day of the new year the corpse was conveyed by a company of citizens under arms, to the number of a hundred and fifty, and interred in the old church of S. Nicholas. No election of provost took place between Gray's death and the following Michaelmas, the four baillies evidently discharging the duties of the office.



As already noticed Provost Gray was married to Christian Cullen, a daughter of Provost George Cullen (77), and after his death she married William Kintore, Advocate, their contract of marriage being dated in September, 1665.†

1663.

79. GILBERT GRAY of Sapiock

(Council Reg., LIV., 470).

It was during this year of office that the municipal laws against Quakers began to be made and enforced. On the 16th December the Council ordered Mr. George Keith, William Leiper, and William Stuart, "thrie traffiquying" Quakers to be conveyed out of the burgh with certification that if they return they will be handed over to the hangman "for punishment of their bodies." At the same time they ordained certain fines to be uplifted

* Diary of John Row. † Reg. of Contracts.

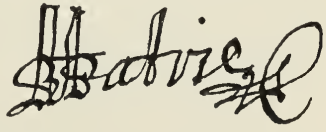
from all burgesses who in any way countenanced the new sect. An order was given during the year to the Dean of Guild to build a new market cross "which should be ane ornament" to the burgh, but it was nearly a quarter of a century afterwards before this order was carried out. Shortly before demitting office, the Provost received a missive from the Privy Council ordering the magistrates to seize all Dutch ships then lying in the harbour, and it was doubtless with a measure of relief that they were able to report that no vessels of that nationality were then in port. The war with Holland was not at all a popular war, and was especially distasteful to the burgesses of perhaps the largest shipping port in the kingdom.

1664-65.

LXXXI. Robert Petrie of Portlethen

(Council Reg., LIV., 549, 629).

Provost Petrie or Patrie was a member of a family, the members of which appear pretty frequently in the burgess roll of the town, and the Provost is said to have been the representative of the ancient family of that name, designed of Glenavon, in Banffshire. He married Anna Forbes, the second daughter of Sir William Forbes, the first Baronet of Craigievar. Because the estates ultimately passed to a nephew, it has been usually taken for granted that the Provost had no issue, but this was not the case. There was at least one son of the marriage, William, baptised 28th December, 1662, but he appears to have died in infancy. A sister of the Provost's, Elizabeth Petrie, married Rev. James Chalmers, a son of the minister of Boyndie, and himself for some time minister at Paisley. While ministering there he was appointed, on the restoration of Episcopacy, to the Bishopric of Orkney, but died before he



was actually consecrated. The second son of this marriage was Captain Charles Chalmers, who ultimately succeeded to Portlethen, and by whom it was sold. Anna Forbes died in November, 1675, and the Provost was dead by the 24th April, 1688, when James Petrie, eldest son of Robert Petrie, merchant in Edinburgh, was served heir to his uncle. In a MS. return for poll, dated 1694, this James Petrie, who describes himself as "late off' Portlethene," gives up his stock for the purpose of the poll-tax as above 500 and within 5,000 merks. At that date he was married and had two young children, one of whom was in all probability the "Robert Patrie, son to Portlethen," who was interred in the family grave in S. Nicholas Church on the 8th May, 1701. The Provost's arms are said to have been—Azure, a bend between a stag's head erased in chief, and three cross crosslets fitcheé in base, argent; on a chief of the second three escallops gules. Crest, an eagle soaring aloft, looking at the sun, proper. Motto "Fide sed vide." In the Baronage of Angus and Mearns, from which these arms are taken, it is said that Burns's song, "The lass that made the bed for me," was composed on an amour of Charles II., when skulking about Aberdeen during the usurpation. The King, it is said, formed *une petite affaire* with a daughter of the House of Portlethen, who was the "lass" referred to in the song. If there is any truth in the story, which is extremely doubtful, it could not have been any of the Provost's family, as he did not acquire Portlethen from the Buchans till after the Restoration.

In July, 1665, there was a meeting of the Convention of Burghs held in Aberdeen, at which Petrie was elected moderator. This was not the last time, however, that the honour was put upon him, although on the second occasion it was rather dearly purchased. Charles, by a letter dated in July, 1674, addressed himself to the Convention, asking them to revoke their statutes which provided that burgesses might be elected as representatives to Parliament, although not actual indwellers of the burghs they represented. In proceeding to draw up an answer to His

Majesty's letter, several members of the Convention were not pleased at the manner in which it was couched, and refused to be parties to sending it, but the answer bearing date 17th August was ultimately approved of by the majority of the Commissioners present. Among those who did not see their way to plainly tell the King that the burghs in Scotland had endured quite enough of interference in their affairs by His Majesty was James Currie, Provost of Edinburgh, and moderator of the Convention. As he refused to sign the letter he left the chair, and Petrie was chosen moderator for the purpose of signing the letter. The result was most disastrous to the Provost, for the letter was considered highly offensive, and he was fined in the large sum of a thousand pounds Scots. Petrie was in Aberdeen till about the middle of January, 1675, but evidently having difficulty in raising the amount of the fine, he went south to Edinburgh, and on the 18th January the Council minutes of that city contain the following:— "Provost Peitrie in Aberdeane entered in prison within the Tolbuth of Edr., according to the Council's order." Meanwhile, a meeting of the Convention had been held in Edinburgh, when a letter was adopted and sent to His Majesty, entirely repudiating the former missive, and intimating that it had been deleted from the minutes of the Convention. The magistrates of Aberdeen, acting along with the Council, evidently got alarmed at the turn matters had taken, and they also took the earliest opportunity of sending a commissioner to the Convention to express their entire disapproval of the action taken by Provost Petrie. The Provost appears to have remained in ward for some considerable time, as it was not till the month of April that the Council, on the supplication of Petrie, agreed to lend him the sum of a thousand pounds to pay the fine. It does not appear that the Provost ever repaid this sum, the burgh feeling itself, doubtless, in honour bound for the debt, considering how it had been contracted.

The Council minutes during the later period of Petrie's term of office are largely taken up with matters relating to the

pressing of seamen and the difficulties encountered in obtaining the town's quota of men to serve in the navy against the Dutch.

On the 5th February, 1667, Petrie made resignation for the purpose of a new infeftment in favour of himself and his spouse of "all and haill the lands of Portlethen, with the seaport, haven, and harbourie of Portlethen; all and haill the lands of Balquharne and Clasefarquhar, superiority of Cuikstone and Auquhorties, with power to gather wrack and wars [wares] in the sea flood within wholl bounds."*

1666.

79. GILBERT GRAY OF SAPHOCK

(Council Reg., LIV., 698).

The only events of importance during the year were the purchase by the Council of guns to protect the burgh against invasion by the foreign foe, and the appointment of public days of rejoicing for victories over the "Dutches." A regular foot post between the burgh and Edinburgh on two days of the week, Wednesday and Friday, was established for the payment of two shillings Scots for a letter of a single sheet, two sheets four shillings, and packets at the rate of five shillings the ounce. This post was to take the place of the former foot runners, who only came and went at irregular intervals.

1667-70.

81. ROBERT PETRIE OF PORTLETHEN

(Council Reg., LV., 53, 117, 173, 253).

In October of 1669 a great fire occurred at the head of the Shiprow, which caused considerable damage, for, besides the houses actually burned, several others were taken down to prevent the fire spreading. The Council, considering the great loss sustained by the owners of these houses, ordered a special

* Reg. of Contracts.

collection at the various church doors for furnishing some relief for the damage they had sustained.

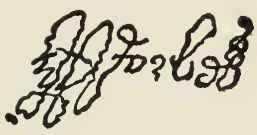
About this date the statutes against Papists and Quakers appear to have been carried out with the utmost rigour, the burgesses being placed under heavy penalties for letting houses or having any dealings with persons of either sect. The tolbooth was soon filled with the professors of the latter sect, and the chapel on Castlehill had to be used as a place of temporary confinement for these inoffensive persons, the story of whose sufferings forms neither an entertaining nor creditable chapter in local history.

1671-73.

LXXXII. Robert Forbes of Rubislaw

(Council Reg., LV., 336, 430, 516).

Robert Forbes was the son of Thomas Forbes of Rubislaw,* and was admitted a brother of the Guild so early as 15th April, 1616. His father, who was one of the magistrates, died in September, 1622, and Forbes, who, if of age, was nothing more, succeeded to the estate of Rubislaw. The Provost was married to Annas or Agnes Forbes, and had issue, among others, Thomas, his eldest son, who succeeded to Rubislaw on his father's death; Jean, who is charged in the Kirk Session accounts of 1688-9 with the sum of 250 merks, as part of the principal sum left by her father, and is then described as the relict of Principal More; Besse, baptised 9th November, 1641; and Robert, baptised 13th November, 1651. A grandson of the Provost, Mr. Robert Gordon, son of the deceased James Gordon of Seaton, presented a petition on 8th December, 1737, asking the magistrates for assistance, as he was in reduced circumstances.† The Provost died in August, 1678, and on the 19th of that month he was interred in an "ocken"



* Treasurer's Accounts, 1623-4. † Council Reg., LX., 510.

coffin within the church of S. Nicholas. At his death he mortified the sum of three hundred merks for the poor subject to the liferent of a sister. Thomas Forbes, who succeeded, was married to Jeane Jamesone, and in the return made by her for poll in 1694, she states that her husband had been out of the kingdom for several years, and that he had no stock. Their family at this date consisted of one child under seven years of age. The estate of Rubislaw, after having been in the family for a considerable period, was sold by Thomas to Sir George Skene in 1687.

The arms borne by the Provost were—Azure, a skein fesse argent, hilted and pommelled or, between three bear's heads couped of the second, and muzzled sable. Crest—A dove proper.*

The principal matters coming before the Council during the three years in which Forbes held the civic chair were the repairing of the defences of the burgh, and the enforcement of the laws against Quakers, especially in regard to the liberty of interment, their dead being removed from the burial ground enclosed by them on the east side of the Gallowgate to the burgh churchyards.

1674.

81. ROBERT PETRIE OF PORTLETHEN

(Council Reg., LV., 602).

Provost Petrie presided at some meetings in the beginning of January, 1675, but after his journey to Edinburgh and incarceration in the Tolbooth of that city, he does not appear to have acted as provost on his return, as his name does not occur in the sederunt of the Council meetings.

1676-84.

LXXXIII. Sir George Skene of Fintray and Rubislaw

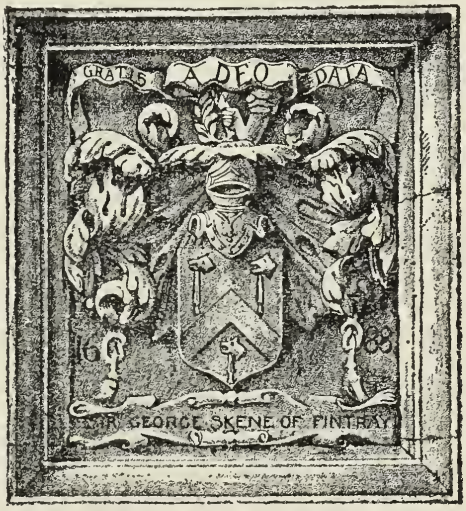
(Council Reg., LVI., 166, &c.).

Provost Skene was the son of David Skene at the Mill of Potterton, by his second wife, Claris Seaton, and was born in

* Family of Forbes of Waterton.

Sir GEORGE SKENE
of Fintray and Rubislaw.

1619.* His half brother, David, apprenticed him to George Ædie, an Aberdeen merchant trading in Dantzic, and the introduction thus obtained to the commercial world was the beginning which enabled the Provost in after years to acquire a handsome fortune, with part of which he bought Wester Fintray in 1666, and in 1687 the estate of Rubislaw. The Provost was never married, and in consequence he took the family of his half-brother, David, consisting of two sons and a daughter, Katherine, and educated them with the view of making them his heirs. The two nephews, George and Alexander, disappointed their uncle by their profligate behaviour, and the lands of Rubislaw went ultimately to a grand-nephew, Mr. George Skene, one of the Regents in King's College. The daughter Katherine married David Ædie, eldest son of George Ædie, referred to above. Sir George died on the 9th April, 1707, aged 88 years, and was interred in the family burying-ground at the west wall of S. Nicholas churchyard, where an inscription records his death as above and the fact that he was provost of Aberdeen for nine years.† The arms of the Provost as recorded in the Lyon Register were—"Gules a chevron argent betwixt three



* Memorials of the Family of Skene of Skene, 131.
† Cf. Scottish Notes and Queries, II., 150.

skens of the second hefted and pommelled or, surmounted of als many woolfs heads couped of the third tusked proper." Crest—"A dexter hand issuing out of ane cloud reaching a garland of Lawrell punctuated." Motto—"Gratis a Deo data." These arms are familiar to most citizens from the prominent position they occupied in the old house of Rubislaw, now removed, and the town house of the Provost in the Guestrow, now known as the Victoria Lodging house. The Provost at his death left the sum of a thousand merks by his will to the kirk-session for behoof of the poor of the burgh.

There were not many affairs of interest transacted during Skene's tenure of office, but among the few mention may be made that the Council, in 1678, thought it expedient, on account of the increase of "Poperie and Quakerisme," to take the burgesses bound by their oath on admission to adhere to and maintain the Protestant religion as at present professed and authorised in the Church of Scotland, denying Popery and Quakerism, and all other heresies. Almost eight years afterwards, viz., in March, 1686, tolerance in the matter of religion had made such headway that the Council saw their way to rescind and discharge the addition to the burgess oath relating to the Papists and the Society of Friends. The long spoken of scheme for a new cross was at length reduced to a definite proposal during Skene's tenure of office, and in January of 1686 the Council, having had the benefit of inspecting pasteboard models of the proposed structure, agreed to contract with John Montgomery, mason, to build a cross according to the design shown for the sum of a hundred pounds sterling money. The result of this contract was the present beautiful cross, which, as the work of a country mason, has been justly admired.

Skene, while attending the Parliament of 1681, in Edinburgh, was knighted by the Duke of York, then acting as Commissioner to the Scottish Parliament. In 1685 the Provost was chosen by the Council to present an address of congratulation to the King on his accession to the throne as James II.

At the Michaelmas election of 1685 a complaint was made

against the election of Sir George Skene by Walter Robertson, baillie, acting for himself and certain of the citizens. The matter was carried before the Privy Council, but the Council declined to commit themselves in the quarrel by espousing the cause of either party, leaving the question to be discussed as a personal matter between the parties. The subject at issue—the legality of Sir George's election—was submitted to the decision of the Duke of Gordon, who, in his decreet arbitral, found that Sir George's election was perfectly valid, and ordained Walter Robertson, in presence of the Council, to declare that the information given in by him was out of no personal prejudice, but only for maintaining the privileges of the burgh. The practical outcome of this dispute was that, to prevent all animus, both parties agreed not to interfere in the burgh affairs as magistrates for a period of three years.

Through the kindness of Miss Skene, Folkestone, a descendant of the Rubislaw family, a copy of the portrait of Sir George Skene in her possession is given as an illustration. Another portrait of the Provost is in the possession of Mr. William F. Gibbon, Pershore, a descendant of Katherine Skene and David Ædie. In the later portrait the Provost also wears a wig, white lace necktie, and an official robe in red and white, probably that in which he attended the Parliament of 1681.

1685-87.

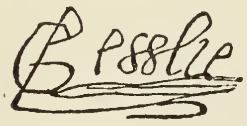
LXXXIV. George Leslie

(Council Reg., LVII., 186, 236, 266).

On Sir George Skene's resignation of the Provostship in terms of his agreement with Baillie Robertson, a new election took place at Michaelmas, 1685. On the day of the election a letter was produced from the Lord Chancellor, recommending George Leslie to be provost as a command from the King, whom the missive stated had in himself the power of naming the magistrates of all his burghs as oft as may be considered good for his service. This side of the "Divine Right," although it must have struck the burgesses

as nothing less than a usurping of their undoubted rights, was acquiesced in, and Leslie was elected as provost for the ensuing year.

George Leslie was the second son of William Leslie by his wife, —— Duncan, his elder brother John being a merchant in Aberdeen, but died at Dantzic. The future provost may be the party referred to in the Guild Roll on the 8th December, 1647, as George Leslie, servant to Provost Patrick Leslie, who was then admitted burgess in respect of his labours during the prevalence of the plague. Provost Leslie married Christian Walker, a sister of Provost Alexander Walker (90), and had the following family :—Isobel, baptised 2nd May, 1648, married to Cruickshank of Berrichill; Marie, baptised 11th September, 1649, married Alexander Davidson of Newton; Sarah, baptised 20th March, 1651, married Robert Cruickshank of Banchory, afterwards provost; Patrick, baptised 28th June, 1652; John, baptised 2nd April, 1654, afterwards a member of Council and a magistrate, married probably Barbara Ædie; Rachel, baptised 24th April, 1656; James, baptised 30th December, 1658, a merchant in Dantzic, most probably with his uncle John, and who in 1707 "mortified and doted" the sum of 2,400 merks for behoof of decayed burgesses of Guild, their widows and orphans; George, baptised 18th June, 1661; Gilbert, baptised 1st November, 1664; and Alexander, baptised 29th June, 1667. Provost Leslie died in January, 1692, and was survived by his wife for several years. In 1694 she made the following return for the poll of that year :— "Relict of George Leslie, late provost off Abd., lyfrents above ten thousand merkes. Has one sone, two grand-children, and two servants, who has eighte pund by yeare." * The son who was then living with his mother was evidently Gilbert, who signs the return. Leslie had, it appears, made a considerable fortune in business, and at his death did not forget the needy of his own



* MS. Return.

class, as by his will he left the sum of a thousand merks for behoof of decayed and indigent burgesses of Guild.

At the Michaelmas election of 1686 the Provost submitted a letter he had received from the Chancellor, prohibiting all elections within the burghs of Scotland at that time, and ordering the magistrates then in office to remain till His Majesty's further pleasure should be made known. For the purpose of seeing this mandate carried out there was an order—or recommendation, rather—to the Earl of Errol and the Earl Marischal to attend in the Council Chamber on the ordinary day for carrying through the election. The following year the Council, on the occasion of the birth of the Prince of Wales, revived in some measure the form of rejoicings which had prevailed in the burgh about a century before. After service in church, high holiday was observed by the whole of the citizens, and while wine ran in abundance at the cross, the town resounded with the discharges of artillery from the batteries placed on the Castlehill and at the Block-house. The King was evidently determined to make good his claim to keep the appointment of the magistrates and Council in his own hand, for at the Michaelmas election of 1687 a warrant was received from the Privy Council ordering that the election should be delayed till His Majesty's pleasure was known. The Privy Council shortly afterwards, in pursuance of a Royal command, nominated a magistracy and Council, who were thereafter elected.

In the following year—1688—the usual warrant forbidding an election was received, but on the 12th November a letter was received from the Earl of Perth, then Chancellor, permitting the election to take place in the usual manner.

1688-89.

LXXXV. Alexander Gordon

(Council Reg., LVII., 297, 323).

Alexander Gordon was the son of John Gordon, merchant in Aberdeen, and was born in 1626. He married Grissel Walker,

supposed to be a sister of Provost Alexander Walker, and had the following family:—John, baptised 4th February, 1658, a magistrate the same year as his father was provost; Isobel, baptised 16th June, 1661; Janet, baptised 3rd February, 1663; George, baptised 14th June, 1665, married Janet Skene, a granddaughter of Provost John Jaffray; James, baptised 22nd July, 1667; Jean, baptised 25th May, 1669; Anna, baptised 29th September, 1670, married George Cruickshank, merchant, and died 29th December, 1755, aged 86 years; and a son Charles. Provost Alexander Gordon died on the 24th March, 1692, aged 66 years, and was buried in S. Nicholas Churchyard, where a lair-stone still marks the spot, but the inscription upon it has become partly illegible. Although the despotic power of James was not exercised at the election of 1688, it would appear that it was not carried out with perfect freedom. William Hay, writing to the Countess of Errol on the 20th November, 1688, says *:—"Your ladyship has heard of the new election of the magistrats heir, quhich as I am informed was done by a list sent from Edinburgh to the old Councill by ther dictator Bailyie Adie." On the flight of James the Council on 8th January, 1689, only two dissenting, resolved to send Dr. George Garden, one of the city ministers, as their Commissioner, with an address to the Prince of Orange. The choice of Garden does not seem to have been a happy one, for the Council had afterwards to complain to the General Assembly against him for having never prayed for Their Majesties, King William and Queen Mary, and he was deposed by the Privy Council for this cause in 1692. Dr. Garden's sentiments represented that of the majority, probably, of the citizens, for many of them had embraced Episcopacy, and had no wish to

* Miscell. Spalding Club, II., 295.

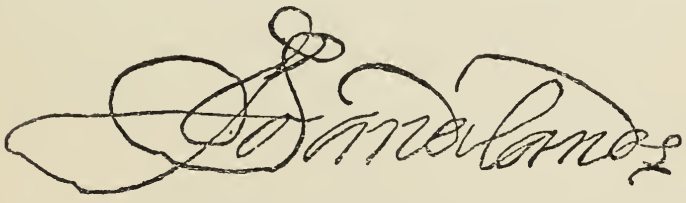
return again to the Presbyterian form of worship, which was now sure to be enforced under the changed conditions of government. The extent of this feeling was, however, much exaggerated in England, as would appear from the following extract from a newsletter dated 26th January, 1688-9, and quoted in the Historical MSS. Reports*:—"The Presbyterians in Scotland continue very insolent. They took the Mayor of Aberdeen and put a cape about his neck, led him about the town, and afterwards caused him to hang two dogs, one of which he called 'Presbyter' and the other 'Quaker,' and after committed him to prison." No reference to such a matter occurs in the Council Register, and there is every reason to believe that the story has no foundation in fact.

1690.

LXXXVI. John Sandilands of Countesswells

(Council Reg., LVII., 341).

Provost Sandilands was descended of a family which settled in Aberdeenshire about 1606, the first of the family being a James Sandilands, who bought the lands of Craibstone, in the



parish of Newhills. He was an advocate in Edinburgh, and became Commissary Clerk of Aberdeenshire. His second son James, born in 1610, was the first proprietor of that name of Cotton, and married in 1640 Marjory Burnett, a daughter of Baillie Alexander Burnett of Countesswells. This James Sandilands was first a Regent, then Civilist of King's College, and afterwards Town-Clerk of Aberdeen. By his marriage with

* 12th Report, Appendix VII.

Marjory Burnett he had issue three sons and two daughters, the second son being the Provost. Sandilands married for his first wife a daughter of the house of Arbuthnot, and the widow of a younger brother of Sir Thomas Burnett of Leys; and for his second wife, Ann, a daughter of John Udny of Newhills. By his second marriage he had issue a daughter named Martha, who married George Gordon of Shillagreen.* Besides this daughter the return for the poll tax in 1696 gives the names of other three children—James, who perished at sea; Peter, and May. The Provost was succeeded in Countesswells by his eldest son, John, who married Jean Forbes, daughter of Thomas Forbes of Waterton. Patrick, the second son of Provost Sandilands, was designed of Countesswells in 1770.

The Council minutes at this date are of the most fragmentary character, and consequently they do not show the causes which led up to the issue of a warrant by the Privy Council, dated 23rd June, 1691, addressed to the Council ordering a new election of provost. The election was, however, carried out and Sandilands deposed, and the only reason that can be assigned for adopting this extraordinary procedure is that he was not well affected towards Their Majesties King William and Queen Mary.

The arms borne by Sandilands of Craibstone were quarterly, 1st and 4th argent, a bend counter-embattled azure; 2nd and 3rd argent, a heart gules, on a chief azure three mullets of the field.†

8TH JULY, 1691-92.

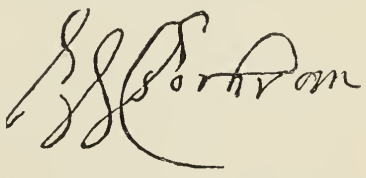
LXXXVII. Walter Cochran of Drumbreck

(Council Reg., LVII., 353, 357, 387).

On Sandilands' removal from the provostship, the result of the new election was that Cochran was elected by a plurality of votes. Provost Cochran was the eldest son of Baillie Walter Cochran of Drumbreck, by his spouse Janet Gordon, whose

* Houses of Moir and Byres, 181. † Ordinary of Arms, 9, 150.

deaths occurred respectively on 7th December, 1669, and 27th June, 1683. The other children of Baillie Cochran besides the Provost, were William, admitted burgess of Guild, 22nd January, 1656; Robert; Jean, married as first wife to Baillie Alexander Alexander; and Isobel, married to John Leslie, son to Baillie Leslie, died 26th February, 1663. Provost Cochran was married to Margaret Butler, and there is in the interment books of S. Nicholas Churchyard evidence of several of their children having died young. His family, so far as known, were Anna, baptised 30th October, 1675; Janet, baptised 21st October, 1676; Elizabeth, baptised 30th June, 1678; Walter, baptised 15th November, 1679; Margaret, baptised 19th December, 1680; and Margaret, baptised 30th April, 1682. His son, Walter, succeeded him in the estate of Drumbreek, in the parish of Udny, while his grandson, also called Walter, was appointed Depute Town-Clerk in 1728. The Provost's lady died in March, 1694, as is recorded on a lair stone lying in S. Nicholas Churchyard, the inscription on which is as follows:—"Here lyes Margrat Butler, relict of the deceast Mr. Walter Cochran of Drumbreck, late Provost of Abd., who deceast in the moneth of March, 1694. . . ." The reason of the omission of Provost Cochran's name from the inscription is not very easily explained, unless on the supposition that he did not die in Aberdeen. The Provost is said to have died about the 5th December, 1694, in which case the above inscription must have been cut after that date. The arms registered as belonging to the Cochrans of Drumbreck were—ermine, on a chief gules a stag's head erased or, between two mullets argent. A fine specimen of these arms can be seen on one of the oak forms or seats presently in Drum's Aisle, S. Nicholas Church, and which had formed the Provost's pew in the church. Besides the arms, the seat contains the initials W. C., and the motto "Concordia Vincit."

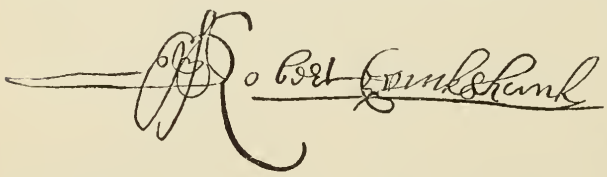


1693-96.

LXXXVIII. Robert Cruickshank of Banchory

(Council Reg., LVII., 419, 453, 491, 530).

Robert Cruickshank, born in 1623, is believed to have been one of a large family of George Cruickshank by his wife Mattie Gray. Provost Cruickshank married Sarah Leslie, the third daughter of Provost George Leslie (84) by his wife, Christian Walker. The issue of the marriage was five sons and six daughters, of whom five were living in family in 1694, when the Provost made the following return for the poll taken in that year:—"Robert Cruickshank of Banchorie, Provost of Aber. is not poleable within this brugh because his greatest fortune layes in the Countrie, but geves up his familie within the brugh of Aber. as follows, viz.:—He hath ane wife and five children in familie, two servant lasses, each of which gets sexteen marks of yeirly fie, and ane man servant, who gets 24 lib per annum."* The poll taken two years later discloses the names of five of the family—George, who was admitted a burgess in 1687, and qualified as an advocate in Aberdeen, married, 1699, Elizabeth, a daughter of John Gordon; James, admitted burgess in 1692, was afterwards designed as chirurgeon in Kent county, in Maryland; Christian, baptised 4th August, 1677; Mary, baptised 21st August, 1681; and Jean, married to Alexander Watson, merchant in Aberdeen.



The other members of the family not mentioned in the Poll Book were Robert, baptised 12th June, 1673, died in infancy;

* MS. Return.

Robert, baptised 6th July, 1674, who became a merchant in London; Helen, who married the Rev. John Whyte, minister of Coylton, in Ayrshire; Elspet, who married John Johnston, afterwards provost; John, baptised 12th March, 1676; and Isobel, baptised 11th August, 1679. Cruickshank bought the estate of Banchory from John Forbes of Banchory in 1682. The Provost died on the 3rd of May, 1717, at the ripe old age of ninety-four years, and was interred in S. Nicholas Churchyard, where a lair stone still lies informing all who care that "Here lyes, under the hope of a blessed resurrection, Robert Cruickshank of Banchorie, late Provost of Abd, who departed this life the 3 of May, 1717, and of his age 94 years. And also Sarah Leslie, his spous, who departed this life the first day of Janry, 1716, and of her age the 66th year."

By Deed of Assignation, dated 18th March, 1715, the Provost granted the Dean of Guild the sum of one thousand merks, the interest of which he directed to be paid "towards the maintenance of ane decayed Burges of Gild of the burgh and his wife, or the relict or children of Burgesses of Gild," his own relations or any of the name of Cruickshank to be preferred.*

Among the events of Cruickshank's provostship were the endeavours of the Council to get Presbyterianism once more established as the religion of the people, and in this task they evidently had considerable trouble. It was not until June of 1694 that the Provost took steps toward the election of a new session, and his action was approved of by a majority of the Council. In November following, however, the Episcopal session was still exercising jurisdiction, and the Council sent one of their number to intimate to them that they were not a "legall sessione," and to forbid their collector from intromitting with the utensils of the Church. A French war scare in March, 1696, was the occasion for a great display of energy, and what between the appointment of officers for the various quarters, arrangements for watching

* Mortification Book.

the coast and drilling and mustering of the inhabitants, the burgh soon began to wear the appearance of an armed camp, strongly reminding the older burgesses of the stirring times of the "forties."

One of the minor works carried out during the four years under review was the rebuilding of Ruthrieston Bridge, which was completed during 1693-4. On the completion of the work the Provost, it appears, without the sanction of the Council, had a stone with his arms carved upon it built into the bridge. On 23rd February, 1698, the Council, then principally composed of a party to whom Cruickshank had made himself specially obnoxious, ordered the arms which the Provost "did clandistinly cause put up" to be removed and given to him on his paying the price. Naturally, Cruickshank refused to pay anything, and accordingly the stone was reversed, and on the other end the following inscription was cut:—"Senatus Aberdonensis hunc pontem, impensis ex Ære ad pontem Dee spectante extruendum Curavit, 1693." The bitter feeling which prompted the action had spent itself, however, before the Council meeting held on the 13th September, 1705, when it was "appointed that the Mr. of Kirk-work should turn the stone whereon the inscription is that Robert Cruickshank of Banchorie, his armes, which are on the back thereof, may be seen, and to add Provost of Aberdeen to his designation when this bridge was built." The arms of the Provost were or, three boars' heads couped sable. The feeling against Cruickshank above referred to was one of strong resentment by a numerous party in the Council against the unfair means taken by him to secure his election year after year to the chair. At the Michaelmas election of 1696, a vigorous protest was lodged against his election as provost for another year, but Cruickshank felt himself strong enough to go forward despite the opposition, and managed to get himself elected for another term. The following year, however, he decided to retire, and put up his son-in-law, John Johnston.

His grandson, Robert Cruickshank, a son of George Cruickshank, advocate, sold the estate of Banchory to James Gordon, Ardmellic, by disposition, dated 16th September, 1724.

1697.

LXXXIX. **John Johnston**

(Council Reg., LVII., 583).

Provost Johnston is said to have been descended from the family of Middle Disblair, and to have been a son of William Johnston of Middle Disblair. As already noticed he married Elspet Cruickshank, a daughter of Provost Cruickshank, by whom he had no issue. The Provost was buried within the church of S. Nicholas on the 20th November, 1698. It is believed that his widow in 1722 married William Gordon of Goval.

At the election of 1697, a large number of the Council stayed away, but Cruickshank was not to be put down in any such manner, and although there was not a quorum present, the election was proceeded with by the aid "of burghers off the streets," and Johnston, out of a leet of three, was chosen provost. Against this encroachment on the burgh liberties a part of the old council, headed by Thomas Mitchell and John Allardes, baillies, protested and applied to the Privy Council for redress. The protest and the deliverance of the Privy Council deposing Johnston and appointing a new election is engrossed in the Council Register, and occupies several pages of the Register. The allegations made against Cruickshank were that he had been too long in office already, that he had given no opportunity for inquiry into the accounts of the burgh, and that the endeavour to get his son-in-law elected was an attempt on Cruickshank's part to continue to hold the chief power in the Council. Against Johnston it was urged that it was well known that he was a professed and open enemy to the established religion, did not believe in capital punishment, and, moreover, that he was a member of that "detestable sect" called Quakers. Doubtless these considerations

had their influence on the Privy Council, but apart from these they had sufficient warrant for ordering a new election in the fact that at Michaelmas the election had been carried out by a section of the Council only. The Decreet of the Privy Council, dated 25th November, set Johnston's election aside on this ground chiefly.

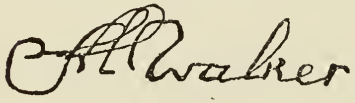
Provost Johnston had a charter of a sixth part of the Cruive fishing on Don from the Town Council, of date 14th September, 1697, and with consent of his brother George he conveyed it on 8th November, 1698, to Alexander Johnston in Pettens.*

8TH DECEMBER, 1697.

XC. **Alexander Walker**

(Council Reg., LVII., 605).

Provost Walker was born about 1631, so that he was about sixty-six years of age when he consented to fill the civic chair between the above date and the following Michaelmas. He was twice married, his first wife being Anna Boyes, and his second



Helen Irvine, a daughter of Alexander Irvine of Murthill. By his two marriages he had a family of three sons and eight daughters. Alexander, the eldest son, was baptised 28th March, 1671, admitted a burgess of Guild, 26th September, 1682, and died 28th May, 1694; Patrick, baptised 29th May, 1675; George, born in 1705, was an advocate in Aberdeen, and married Mary, a daughter of Sir Alexander Cumming of Culter; Marjorie, baptised 5th March, 1669; Barbara, baptised 25th March, 1673; Magdalen and Anna, baptised 6th May, 1677; Margaret, baptised 17th September, 1678, married to the Rev. Colin Campbell of S. Nicholas Church, and became the mother of the celebrated Principal George Campbell of Marischal College; Jean, baptised

* Inventory of Writs of Fishing.

3rd June, 1682; Ann, died unmarried on the 12th August, 1791 in the ninety-first year of her age; and Helen.

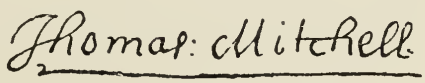
Provost Walker died on the 25th February, 1711, aged about eighty years, and was survived by his second spouse for the long period of forty-five years. Mrs. Walker died on the 15th January, 1756, in her ninetieth year, and in the notice of her death she was described as "a lady, who in all the stations of life was a real ornament to the sex, and whose valuable qualities were so much heightened rather than impaired by her great age, even to her last moments, that her death is much regretted."* The Provost's burial place in S. Nicholas Churchyard is covered by a lair stone, on which is recorded the deaths of himself and several of his family.

1698-99.

XCI. Thomas Mitchell of Thainston

(Council Reg., LVII., 671, 717).

Provost Mitchell was the second son of Baillie Thomas Mitchell by his second wife, Marjory Moir, one of the Old Aberdeen family of that name. The Provost was born in 1659 (baptised 16th January), and in 1692, the first year in which he was elected to the magistracy, he married Janet Leslie, a daughter of Provost Sir Patrick Leslie (70). The issue of this marriage was six children, all of whom died young. Samuel and Elizabeth were the only children returned in the Poll of 1696, while Janet Leslie died on the 7th September, 1698. His two sons, Alexander and John, were admitted as infant burgesses on 26th September, 1704. Provost Mitchell married for his second wife Isabella Patton, a sister of Alexander Patton, afterwards provost, who died 22nd April, 1703, in the



* *Aberdeen Journal.*

thirty-ninth year of her age. In 1703 he purchased the lands of Easter Beltie and Annesley from Sir Robert Forbes of Learny, and in 1717 the estate of Thainston, near Kintore, from Forbes of Tolquhon. On the 19th August, 1718, the Provost buried his son Alexander, and he himself died on the 20th December of the same year. About a week prior to his decease, the Provost's son, Thomas, paid over in his father's name the sum of a thousand merks to the Guild Brethren's Hospital, and five hundred merks for behoof of the poor; and, in the following year the kirk-session received a similar sum for a like purpose.

Baillie Mitchell married for his third wife, on 3rd August, 1665, Katherine Dun, and a transaction regarding the right to a half-net's salmon fishing on Don in 1690 gives the names of the Provost's half brothers and sisters alive at that date as Alexander, Patrick, Charles, Catherine, Margaret, and Rachel. His full sister Janet married in 1683 Sir John Johnston of New Place, afterwards of Caskieben, merchant in Aberdeen.

Provost Mitchell was survived by his third wife, Jean Mercer, who on 16th August, 1725, did, of her own accord, "make over and grant to the Church Session of the burgh, a big silver dish with three lugs holding more than a chappin for gathering up the tokens at the communion table, or for any other use the Session shall think fit." This gift was accompanied by a donation of five hundred merks for the charitable relief of her needful relations and their children, married or unmarried, if inhabitants in Aberdeen. Jean Mercer, "relict of Provost Mitchell," was interred in S. Nicholas Churchyard on the 3rd July, 1740. The family burying-place is covered with a lair stone, the inscription on which has in great part now become illegible. Thomas, the Provost's surviving son, succeeded to the estate of Thainston, and his only daughter Barbara, by his spouse Barbara Forbes, married Sir Andrew Mitchell, British Minister to Frederick the Great.

The arms of the Mitchells of Thainston were sable, a fess wavy between three mascles or.

1700-1.

XCII. **John Allardes**

(Council Reg., LVII., 751, 808).

Following out the Act of Council which had been agreed upon in 1697, Mitchell retired at the end of two years, and John Allardes, who had been a member of the Council for a considerable time, was elected for the period of two years. Provost Allardes was the son of John Allardes elder, merchant burgess of the burgh, who died on the 3rd December, 1699, at the advanced age of ninety-nine years. His mother was Isobel Walker, a sister in all probability of Provost Alexander Walker (90). The Provost was baptised 16th July, 1657, and married for his first wife Agnes Mercer, who died on 21st August, 1700, aged forty-one years, so that the Provost accepted office about a month after her death. His second wife was Jean Smart, who survived the Provost, and died upon the 29th November, 1722, aged forty-five years. It is somewhat difficult to distinguish the family of each marriage, but by both unions the Provost had six sons and five daughters. John, the eldest son, was admitted a burgess of Guild while still under age, on the 26th September, 1692; there were two sons of the name of Thomas, while James, the eldest of the family by Jean Smart, Andrew, and George were all admitted burgesses during 1709-10, when the Provost was serving his second term of office. Of the daughters Christian married Rev. James Trail, minister of Brechin, who died in September, 1747, aged fifty-seven years; Katherine married Rev. James Honeyman, minister at Keith-hall, and afterwards of Kinneff; while the names only of the other three sisters have been preserved—viz., Margaret, Isobel, and Jean. Provost Allardes died in his sixty-first year on the 25th of May, 1718, and was interred in the burying-ground of S. Nicholas, where a

lair stone still records the deaths of the Provost and his family. At his death he mortified the sum of five hundred merks to the kirk-session for behoof of the poor of the burgh, under burden of the life-rent to his sister Marjory, the wife of William Prot.* From the session records it would appear that this sum was never received by the session. The Provost had the distinction of being Commissioner for his native burgh in the first Parliament of Queen Anne, and what proved to be the last Scottish Parliament, extending over the period from 1703 to 1707. An interesting incident connected with this matter is recorded, under date 25th September, 1739, when James Allardes, son to the deceased James Allardes, merchant, was admitted an infant burgess, as his mother, a daughter-in-law of the Provost evidently, had complimented the Council by presenting them with the saddle cloth, stirrups, and bridle with which the Provost of Aberdeen rode as Commissioner to Queen Anne's Parliament.†

During Allardes's term of office the Council were actively engaged in building a new pier at the harbour, and for this purpose they received a contribution from the Convention of Burghs of two thousand pounds. As showing the close connection between the burgh and the Low Countries, a voluntary contribution was made in Holland for the same purpose, and although, with one exception, the contributors were Scotch merchants resident there, the interest taken in this local matter was most gratifying to the Council, and while returning them their best thanks, the Council also sent burgess tickets for each of the contributors.

Other matters coming before the Council had reference to reforms in the manners of the people, such as the prohibiting of penny weddings, discharging fiddlers from playing on the streets, and supporting in various ways the Correction House, so as to make it suitable as a temporary home for all idle persons and vagabonds able to work. About this period we have the first

* Session Records, XXII., March, 1731. † Council Reg., LX., 620.

reference to a public coffee-house being established, when George Cruickshank, merchant, was authorised to set up one for the selling of tea, coffee, and chocolate, and for his encouragement he was to get a remittance on all taxation of these articles for a period of nineteen years.

1702-3.

91. THOMAS MITCHELL OF THAINSTON

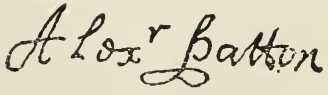
(Council Reg., LVII., 840, 862).

1704-5.

XCIII. **Alexander Patton**

(Council Reg., LVII., 890; *LVIII.*, 17).

Very little has been gleaned concerning the family history of Provost Patton, except that he was the son of Alexander Patton of Kinaldie, by his spouse Isobel Keith, and was baptised on the 10th December, 1673. On the 8th December, 1686, Alexander Patton was served heir to his father, Alexander, in the town and lands of Kinellar, and in the town and lands of Meikle and Little Kinaldies. On the 20th October, 1698, he was admitted a burgess of Guild. The Poll-Book shows that the relict of the late laird of Kinaldie



was at that date (1696) living in the burgh with her three children, Isobel, Jean, and Alexander, and two grand-children, Isobel and Marjorie Forbes, while the same authority gives the name of the then laird of Kinaldie as Alexander Patton, who returns as living in family with him, Isobel Forbes, his niece. The Provost was married and had issue, as two of his children were buried in S. Nicholas Churchyard on the 12th and 27th of March, 1705. On the 24th September, 1700, Alexander, his eldest son, was admitted an infant burgess, and on 30th October, 1705, there is an entry in the Kirk Work Accounts of a payment for the interment

of "Provost Patton," and on the 13th February of the following year licence was granted to put a lair stone on his grave free of charge, but no tombstone now exists, although his grave at the west wall of the churchyard can be identified.

No new election took place on Patton's death in February, 1705, until the following Michaelmas, the senior baillie acting in the meanwhile.

The arms of Patton of Kinaldie were azure, a sword in pale argent between three crescents of the last.

1706-7.

XCIV. John Gordon (Campvere)

(Council Reg., LVIII., 53, 72).

Provost John Gordon was the son of John Gordon, merchant in Aberdeen, by his wife Christian Henderson, and a brother of Provost Alexander Gordon (85). The Provost was born in 1654, and, to distinguish him from his father, and from John Gordon, his cousin and one of the magistrates, was often designed "Younger," and also "Campvere," from the fact that, prior to his election as provost, he had carried on business as a merchant at the staple port for Scotch goods, which was then fixed at Campvere. By his marriage with Janet Gordon he had several children, among whom were John, baptised 28th February, 1683, died in infancy; John, admitted infant burgess of Guild, 12th November, 1688, who afterwards became Minister of Old Deer; Alexander, admitted burgess same date as his brother, who died August, 1728; and Anne, who married Robert Stewart of Bridgeford, afterwards provost. The Provost's return for poll was in these terms—"John Gordon, younger, marchant in Abd. at fiftie shilling polle, having ane viffe and

three childring, the eldest not exceeding ten yeares off age, and two servants at sixtein marcks a yeare of fie."

Provost Gordon died on the 24th of August, 1730, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, and was survived by his spouse, Janet Gordon, who died in December of the following year. In 1724 he paid over to the kirk-session the sum of a thousand merks "as a free gift and donation" made over and granted by them for the behoof and charitable relief of the poor in the said burgh, but under the condition that he and his spouse should receive meanwhile the interest of the same during their lifetime. The Provost's son John was called by the Presbytery of Aberdeen on the 20th February, 1711, and ordained to the church of Old Deer on the 6th April following. The Episcopal minister, Mr. Livingston, had intimated his determination not to leave the church until compelled by physical force, and as he was supported by the majority of the parishioners, an exciting scene took place when the Presbytery, supported by a force of seventy horsemen, endeavoured to enter the church so as to have Gordon properly placed. The church was found to be strongly barricaded, and the Presbytery, after having been hooted and pelted at by the large crowd present, had to retire without accomplishing their object. Criminal letters were raised against the ringleaders, but the case was ultimately referred to the Lord Justice Clerk for peaceful arbitration, who decided that the Presbytery was right, and Gordon was accordingly duly ordained minister.* He continued at Old Deer till his death in 1718. The incident is fully treated by William Meston in his "Mob contra Mob: or the Rabblers Rabbled," where, in describing the retreat of the Presbytery, he says—

. . . . . .

"Which makes the thing to be admired,
That men with zeal so much inspir'd
Rode faster home, spurr'd on with fear,
Than they advanced to Old Deer." †

* Scott's "Fasti," VI., 621. † Bards of Bon-Accord, 151-2

This settlement, it is understood, led, in great measure, to the passing in 1712 of the Acts of Parliament relating to Toleration and Patronage.

Provost Gordon had the honour of being chosen by the District of Burghs, comprising Aberdeen, Montrose, Arbroath, Brechin, and Bervie, as their representative to the first British Parliament, and the Town Council of the day agreed to pay his expenses while acting as Commissioner. The amount of these expenses was considerable, for, on the first occasion, he received £216 sterling, while, in 1710, he received a further payment of £163 as charges incurred by him attending the last session of Parliament.

The principal municipal work undertaken by the Council during these two years (1706-7) was the carrying out of the scheme for bringing in a supply of spring water from the springs at Carden's Well, on the lands of Gilcomston. It was in connection with this first waterworks scheme that the fountain, now standing in the Green, was erected about 1708 in the Castlegate for the distribution of the water from Carden's Well. Small as the undertaking was as compared with the gigantic schemes since promoted for the same purpose, the bringing in of the water to the burgh was then considered as a great step, and one which was not without its difficulties, for in 1708 the Council, "considering the retardments that Joseph Foster hath met with in bringing in the water to this place," were pleased to "gratify" him with the sum of two hundred pounds Scots, and an additional sum "of thirty-six pounds of drink money to his servants."

A threatened French invasion in the spring of 1708 was the occasion of much disquietude in the burgh, as several of the enemy's fleet had been seen off the coast. This "pretended French invasion," as it was afterwards called, enabled the Magistrates and Council to testify their loyalty by presenting an address to the Queen, in which they praised Her Majesty's diligence in fitting out such a powerful fleet as "cannot but persuade the French King to lay asyde his late usurped prerogative of creating kings at his pleasure."

JOHN ROSS

OF CLOCHCAN AND ARNAGE.

1708-9.

92. JOHN ALLARDES

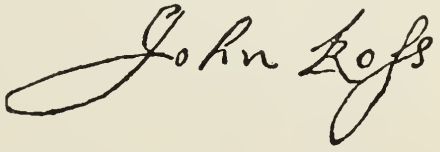
(*Council Reg.*, *LVIII.*, 124, 164).

1710-11.

XCV. John Ross of Clochcan and Arnage

(*Council Reg.*, *LVIII.*, 204, 244).

Provost Ross was the second son of John Ross of Clochcan, in the parish of Old Deer, by his wife Christian, a daughter of Andrew Howieson, merchant, burgess of Aberdeen. The family were descended from the Rosses of Auchlossin, in the parish of Lumphanan, who, in their turn, deduced their descent from the Roses of Kilravock. On the death of Francis Ross of Auchlossin, who fell at the battle of Malplaquet, in September, 1709, Provost Ross became the male representative of that family. The Provost was born in 1665, and was baptised on the 7th April of that year. He was a staunch adherent of the Church of Scotland, and, as a ruling elder in the Church, represented the Presbytery in several General Assemblies at the beginning of the century. In all matters relating to the welfare of the Church he appears to have taken the most lively interest, being specially firm in his opposition to the proposed reintroduction of patronage and the proposal for an Act of Toleration in favour of clergymen of the Episcopal Communion in Scotland.* A series of letters by Principal Blackburn, dated about 1712, addressed to the Provost, evidences the warm interest he took in Church matters. By contract of sale, dated 14th February, 1702, Provost Ross acquired from David Rickart



* Miscell. Spalding Club, I., 56.

the lands and barony of Arnage in Ellon at the price of 40,000 merks Scots, or £2,222 sterling, and on the 22nd July following obtained a charter under the Great Seal erecting these newly-acquired lands into a free barony, with power of "pit and gallows."

The family property of Clochcan was conveyed to him by his niece Jean, Lady Ogilvie, by disposition dated 21st March, 1711.

Provost Ross married on 1st June, 1704—the contract is dated at Echt, 28th April, 1704—Jean Forbes, only daughter of Arthur Forbes of Echt, by his wife Elizabeth Innes. The issue of this marriage was two sons and four daughters. John, baptised at Aberdeen 13th March, 1707, was born deaf and dumb, and on his succession to Arnage, which was not accomplished without considerable trouble and opposition on the part of his sisters, he is generally referred to as the "deaf and dumb laird of Arnage." The second son, Arthur, was baptised 20th August, 1711, and died 12th November, 1719. Of the four daughters Elizabeth, the eldest, was baptised 23rd December, 1705, buried 4th July, 1718; Christian, baptised 19th October, 1708, married, 20th June, 1729, Sir Arthur Forbes, fourth baronet of Craigievar; Catherine, baptised 23rd July, 1710, was buried 24th May, 1711; and Jean, baptised 29th November, 1713, became, in 1739, the first wife of her kinsman, Alexander Aberdein, younger of Cairnbulg, merchant, and afterwards provost of Aberdeen.

Besides the lands of Arnage, Clochcan, Colp, and Forcsterhill, the latter in the parish of Meldrum, the Provost left a personalty of about £60,000 Scots, or a sum in sterling money of £5,000, considered, for the time, to be a large fortune.

Provost Ross died of ague at Amsterdam, where he had gone on business, on 15th September, 1714, in the fiftieth year of his age, and was interred within the English Church of that city.

The Provost's widow survived him for the long period of forty-six years, her death occurring at Aberdeen on the 25th January, 1761, when she was in her eighty-first year. The *Aberdeen Journal*, in referring to her death, remarked that, "as

she was so much distinguished for unfeigned piety without ostentation and extensive charity without show, her death is much regretted, especially by the constant objects of her bounty —those in distress or want."

The illustration of Provost Ross is from a fine portrait, preserved at Arnage Castle, representing him while a young man of about twenty-five, and said to have been painted in 1685 by Sir John Medina, the initials I.M. appearing on the lace collar.

The arms of the Auchlossin family, of which the Provost became representative in 1709, were or, a boar's head couped gules, between three water-bougets, all within a bordure sable.

1712-13.

92. JOHN ALLARDES

(Council Reg., LVIII., 282, 341).

In August, 1714, in terms of an Act of the Privy Council, obtained chiefly at the instance of Robert Barclay, the Council struck out from the form of oath sworn by burgesses of Guild and Trade on admission, all reference to the "heresy" of Quakerism.

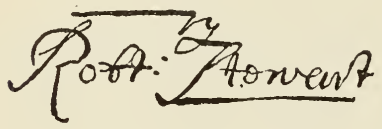
1714.

XCVI. Robert Stewart of Bridgeford

(Council Reg., LVIII., 371).

Provost Robert Stuart or Stewart was the son of Alexander Stewart, said to have belonged to the ancient family of Bonkle and was born in 1670. As already noticed, he married Anne Gordon, a daughter of Provost John Gordon (94), and appears to have had issue—two sons and four daughters. Alexander, the elder son, was admitted an infant burgess, 21st September, 1708, and John, his second son, on 15th September, 1711. The latter was appointed Professor of Mathematics at Marischal College in 1727, and held the Chair till his death in 1766, when he was

succeeded by Professor William Trail. Caroline died unmarried on 19th March, 1795, at the advanced age of seventy-eight years; Janet married Alexander Westland, a merchant burgess of Aberdeen, and died in June, 1743, aged forty-one years; Ann, married James Brands of Old Ferryhill, and died 23rd April, 1793, aged eighty-three years; while the remaining daughter, Isobel, became the wife of the Rev. James Walker, minister of Dunnottar, whom she survived, having died on the 11th of July, 1800. Provost Stewart died on the 10th March, 1749, in the seventy-ninth year of his age, and at his interment had the unique distinction of being carried from his house to the churchyard on the shoulders of six provosts. The then provost, Alexander Robertson, was assisted by five ex-provosts, and the sight was of so unusual a character as to be specially recorded. The *Journal*, in referring to his death, says that his "steady attachment to the present Government in Church and State for many years gained universal applause." On his tombstone in S. Nicholas Churchyard it is recorded of Stewart that "He was thrice Provost of the Town and Lieutenant and Sheriff of the County of Aberdeen, and discharged these and other offices with fidelity; and having lived in the steady practice of piety and virtue, he resigned his soul to God, March 10, 1749." From the same source we learn that his widow was interred at Fetteresso.



The elaborate coat of arms recorded in 1732 by Robert Stewart, Aberdeen, may have been that worn by the Provost:—1st and 4th grand quarters; 1st and 4th quarters, or a fess chequy azure and argent between the mullets of the second; 2nd and 3rd quarters, ermine on a fess sable three crescents argent, a mullet for difference; 2nd and 3rd grand quarters; 1st quarter, azure three boars' heads couped or; 2nd quarter, or, three lions' heads erased gules; 3rd quarter, or, three crescents within a double tressure flory counter, flory gules; 4th quarter, azure three

cinquefoils argent, the charges of the 2nd and 3rd grand quarters within a bordure sable, charged with eight besants.

The nature of the times in which Provost Stewart lived made it almost necessary for public men to declare either for the old House of Stuart or the more recently-established dynasty, and in this connection there is ample testimony that Stewart was a staunch Hanoverian.

The agitation as to the Pretender had been going on for some considerable time prior to the outbreak of the rebellion in 1715, for, in a letter addressed to the Magistrates by John, Earl of Mar, in the previous year, he asks for information regarding some ill-disposed persons at Aberdeen, who did, "in the night-time, and under the disguise of women's apparrell, proclaim the Pretender."* About a year after this, in August, 1715, the Council were called upon to take decided steps for the protection of the burgh, for the Provost reported that he had received information "that the Highlanders were in some motion, and lyke to ryse, and might perhaps attack the towne." The meeting at which this report was given in by Provost Stewart was in the nature of a Head Court of the burgesses, who accordingly authorised the necessary expenditure required to put the town in a proper state of defence, and at the same time recommended the Provost to replenish the town's armoury by the immediate purchase of two hundred stand of arms, "viz. gunns and bayenotts." On the 6th September the standard of the Pretender was first raised at Castleton of Braemar, and on the 17th of the month the Provost had intimation of the fact, as he "represented to the Council that there were rumours passing as if some insults and inroads were to be made upon this burghe by Highlanders and others." Nor was the Provost far wrong in his information, although the invasion of the burgh took place from a different quarter and by a different class. On the 20th September the Earl Marischal entered the town at the head of a troop of county gentlemen and their

* MS., Town-House.

retainers, along with a number of the inhabitants, and from the Cross proclaimed James VIII. with all due ceremony. The same evening the bells were rung and the burgh illuminated, and, says a chronicler, "those that would not obey, rabbled." On the following day the Earl and his party were hospitably entertained by the Incorporated Trades, who appear almost to a man to have declared for the Pretender. The few remaining days of office of the existing Council were not passed in doing much good, for the burgh was nominally in the hands of the rebels. On the day of the election, which fell on the 28th of the month, both parties waited evidently to see what action would be taken by the other, with the result that no election was made on that day, although a proclamation was made through the town that the election would take place in the new church of S. Nicholas on the following day at eleven o'clock, at which all burgesses were to be allowed to have a voice. At this meeting, which was said to represent the greatest part of the burgesses of Guild and free craftsmen, a Jacobite magistracy was chosen, with Patrick Bannerman as provost.*

1715—10TH APRIL, 1716.

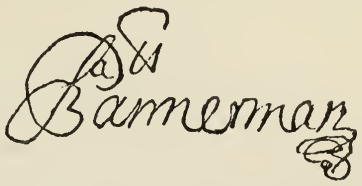
XCVII. **Patrick Bannerman**

(Council Reg., LVIII., 419).

Provost Bannerman, who now took the reins of office, was the fourth son of Alexander Bannerman, first baronet of Elsick, by his wife, Margaret Scott, a daughter of Patrick Scott of Thirlstone, and was born in 1678. He was admitted a burgess of Guild on 10th August, 1687, and afterwards commenced business as a merchant in Aberdeen. Bannerman married, in 1714, Margaret, a daughter of Sir Charles Maitland of Pitrichie, and by this marriage he had two sons and three daughters. Alexander, the elder son,

* Historical Papers, 1699-1750, *XXII.*

was born in 1715, married in 1737 Margaret, the eldest daughter of Thomas Burnett of Kirkhill, and died in 1782; Charles was a Writer to the Signet, and died unmarried, at Edinburgh, in 1748. Of the daughters, Clementina and Jean died unmarried, while Margaret, the youngest, married Alexander Milne, merchant in Aberdeen, and afterwards proprietor of Crimonmogate, by whom she left two sons. The Provost's grandson, Alexander Bannerman, Professor of Medicine in King's College, became the sixth baronet of Elsick,* and his great grandson, Sir Alexander Bannerman, was the first M.P. for the city after the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832.



On the occasion of the presentation of an address to the Pretender at Dunnottar in December, 1715, congratulating him "on his arrival in his ancient kingdom of Scotland," Bannerman received the honour of knighthood, and the title thus conferred was retained by him, and he is so designated on his tombstone in S. Nicholas Churchyard. The Provost died on the 4th of June, 1733, in his fifty-fifth year, and was survived by his widow, who died 31st October, 1750, aged sixty-three years.

One of the first questions considered by the new Council was that of prohibiting the Presbyterian preachers from occupying their pulpits, but on debate the resolution come to was that while allowing them to preach in the new church, they should be forbidden the old church, where the king's seat and the magistrates' loft were placed.

The next action of the Jacobite Council was the imposition of a tax of two hundred pounds sterling for furnishing supplies to the army, and this was followed by the demand for a contribution of two thousand pounds by way of loan, a requisition for three hundred Lochaber axes, and a request that the only printing press

* Account of the Family of Bannerman of Elsick, 1812.

in the town, along with the type, should be sent to the head-quarters of the army at Perth. The Magistrates also endeavoured to raise a troop of horse for the service of the Pretender, but in this they were unsuccessful. On the 22nd December, James landed at Peterhead, and in his journey south to Dunnottar dined in Aberdeen at the house of "Skipper Scott," in the Castlegate. After a short period of six months the rebellion was crushed, and the Jacobite Council demitted office. Provost Bannerman was carried prisoner to Carlisle, and at his trial made a narrow escape of forfeiting his life for the part he took in the historic '15.

10th April, 1716—Michaelmas, 1716.

96. ROBERT STEWART of Bridgeford

(Council Reg., LVIII., 457).

On this day an election took place in accordance with an Act of the Privy Council, made for restoring peace and good government. The procedure was to be the same as if the election had been made at the previous Michaelmas, and so Stewart was elected provost to serve out the term of two years, which was now the recognised period for holding the civic chair. One of the first duties of the newly-elected Council was the drawing up of an address to the King, in which they say that—"As it wes our greatest honour to be among the royall burghs on this syde of the Tay, who were most maltreated for adhering to the present Government, so being now restored to our office by your Majestie's order of ellectioun, we could not but take the first opportunity of congratulating the wisest and best of kings on the late great and happie turn of affairs in these northern pairts." The next action of the Council was to rescind all Acts made by the former Council, and to delete from the burgess roll the names of all those who had been elected by the usurping Council.

1716-17.

94. JOHN GORDON (CAMPVERE)

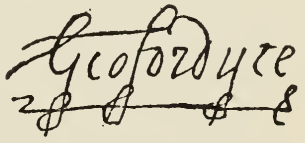
(Council Reg., LVIII., 498, 561).

1718-19.

XCVIII. **George Fordyce of Broadford**

(Council Reg., LVIII., 611, 645).

Provost George Fordyce was a younger son of George Fordyce, in the Haughs of Ashogle, near Turriff, by his wife Barbara Thomson, and was born there in 1663. His father died in 1681, and from then on to his mother's death in 1695, it is almost certain that he carried on the farm of Ashogle, as he is so designed when admitted a burgess on 24th September, 1689. In the Poll-Book of 1696 he appears as tenant of the Mill of Bruxie, Old Deer, the return being made as follows:—



"George Fordyce, merchant ther, his stock is 5,000 merks *inde* with general poll. And for his wife and fyve children." Between 1699 and the death of his first wife, Isobell Walker, in March, 1705, he would appear to have moved into Aberdeen, where he soon took a prominent part in municipal affairs. About 1707, the Provost married for his second wife Elizabeth Brown, a daughter of the Rev. David Brown, minister of Neilston, near Paisley, and a niece of Principal Blackwell, of Marischal College. By his first marriage, Provost Fordyce had five daughters—Barbara, Agnes, Isobell, Mary, and Christian, died May, 1745—while by his second marriage with Elizabeth Brown, he had sixteen of a family—two Elizabeths, Barbara, Isobell, Janet, Catherine, George, David, Alexander, James, John, Robert, three Thomas's, and William. Of the seven sons who attained to man's estate, George (burgess of Guild, 26th September, 1710) succeeded his father in Broad-

ford, but died on the 11th September, 1736, in his twenty-eighth year; David was Professor of Moral Philosophy in Marischal College, and died in September, 1751, being described in a letter of introduction to Lord Braco in 1740, with reference to the vacancy in the church of Keith, as "a very well-accomplished, pretty, young gentleman"; James became a celebrated preacher, and died in 1796; John, sometime a surgeon in the Guards, latterly resided in London; William, the fifth son, like his brother John, was also for a time an army surgeon, but settled latterly in London, where he had a most extensive practice. He was knighted in 1782, and died in 1792. Sir William was Lord Rector of Marischal College in 1790, and in the same year he bequeathed the sum of a thousand pounds to found the Fordyce Lectureship on Agriculture, &c., at the same College. Robert, the sixth son, became a manufacturer in Aberdeen, and for a time was in the magistracy; while Alexander, the remaining son, became a banker in London, married in June, 1770, Lady Margaret Lindsay, second daughter of the Earl of Balcarres, and by his losses, incurred through heavy speculations, produced widespread ruin in commercial circles. The bankruptcy of Fordyce and Co. has been termed "one of the most important domestic events in Britain during the latter part of the eighteenth century." *

Some years prior to his death Provost Fordyce acquired the lands of Broadford, as also a sub-lease of the forfeited lands of the Panmure family in Belhelvie. He resided latterly at Eigie, in that parish, and died on the 13th May, 1733, aged seventy years, having, according to the inscription on his tombstone in S. Nicholas, "by his integrity in publick and goodness in private life, left a better monument in the memory of the good and wise than can be raised to him by posterity." The Provost's widow survived him for twenty-seven years, her death occurring on the morning of the 30th May, 1760. In her obituary notice it is

* Douglas' East Coast, 171; Dingwall Fordyce Family Record, &c.

said that "the most exalted piety, the most extensive benevolence, and the most unconfined charity were the leading principles of her blameless life." The tribute on the family tomb is in still more glowing terms, for it is there stated that "sanctity of mind, sweetness of manners, and simplicity of heart, a temper equally composed and affectionate, a long life free from stain, filled with usefulness, and finished with hope. Such are the honours that distinguish her memory, such the reflections that delight her children. May they follow her fair example, and may their latter end be like hers."

1720-21.

96. ROBERT STEWART of Bridgeford

(Council Reg., LVIII., 683; *LIX.*, 2).

It was during this term of office that the first dancing school was opened in the burgh, when James Hunter, described as a "teacher of manners and good breeding," was allowed by the Council the sum of a hundred merks for school rent. In the same year Joshua Largeon was granted permission to open a similar establishment, and his fees were fixed by the Council at four pounds Scots monthly.

An accidental fire in Broad Street, which caused considerable damage, was the occasion of the Council establishing a fire brigade, and obtaining at a cost of sixty pounds a fire-engine from London, the first of its kind in the north.

1722-23.

98. GEORGE FORDYCE of Broadford

(Council Reg., LIX., 44, 81).

In 1723, the number of incorporated trades was increased by that of the Gardeners, who were sanctioned by an Act of Council, and allowed to form themselves into a friendly society, with

power to choose a boxmaster yearly. For several years in succession the crops appear to have signally failed, and the magistrates considered it their duty to purchase large quantities of meal for retail among the inhabitants, to reduce, so far as possible, the hardships felt by the humbler burgesses.

1724-25.

96. ROBERT STEWART of Bridgeford

(Council Reg., LIX., 117, 207).

It is interesting to find that the Town Council still evinced a great concern in the trade of the burgh by taking measures to ensure that the staple commodities of the district should be kept up to the high standard of excellence for which they had long been famed. Some years prior to this they had passed an Act concerning the preparation and bringing to the market of pork as one of the profitable branches of trade connected with the burgh. Following out the same line of policy, the Council, in 1725, with the view of encouraging the manufacture of linen cloth, ordered four premiums to be given in each of the markets of Turriff (Peter's Fair and Lambas Fair), Strathbogie, and Old Rain (Lawrence Fair) to the persons having the best webs in the markets. That something was requiring to be done in the matter of reviving the trade of the burgh is made perfectly clear from the minutes of the Council about this time. At a meeting of the Council held on the 27th June, 1726, at which were drawn up the instructions to the Commissioners for the burgh at the ensuing Convention of Burghs, it was resolved "to represent to the Convention the great decay of trade in this place for these several years bygone, occasioned chiefly by the small towns on the seaside to the north of this place having now the whole import of goods which formerly came here." An endeavour was therefore directed to be made to get "ane ease and diminution" of the stent, in case the tax-roll should in any way be altered by the Convention.

1726-27.

98. GEORGE FORDYCE OF BROADFORD

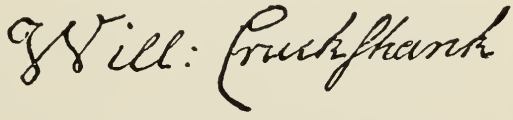
(Council Reg., LIX., 300, 368).

1728-29.

XCIX. **William Cruickshank**

(Council Reg., LX., 2, 101).

The surname of Cruickshank was at this date very common in Aberdeen, and it is not easy, therefore, to identify the parents of the Provost, but it is highly probable that he was the eldest son of George Cruickshank, merchant, and was admitted a burgess of Guild 20th September, 1701. Born in 1679, he married on 11th February, 1703, Isobel Phanes, daughter of William Phanes, at one time Convener of the Incorporated Trades. The issue of this marriage, so far as known, was two sons, James and Thomas, and one daughter, Helen. The Provost's lady died in February, 1736, while Cruickshank's death occurred on the evening of the 2nd June, 1760, in the 81st year of his age. In the usual tone of our "only news-sheet"—the *Aberdeen Journal*—his death is noticed as follows:—"A gentleman who for several years bore the sway in our Magistracy and Councils, and who conscientiously discharged the duties of his station, both in publick and private life. Let it be likewise mentioned to his honour that he firmly adhered to the Reformation principles of the Church of Scotland, of which he has given several sincere and very sensible proofs. In short, so many were his valuable qualities that his death, or, rather, decay of nature, is much regretted; and he was interred with that decency and those publick marks of esteem and regard which belonged to his station and character." On the east side of S. Nicholas



Churchyard there is a monument, the inscription now almost obliterated, which was erected to the Provost's memory by his daughter Helen, and narrates that "here lie interred the remains of William Cruickshank, merchant, and late Provost of this city. He was of the Town Council twenty-two years, and, having served in all its offices with great fidelity, was, in the year 1730 *(sic)* elected Chief Magistrate. While in that station he supported the dignity thereof with honour, and managed the city revenues with that integrity that made him universally esteemed. He was a man of unfeigned piety, and strictly adhered to the reformed principles of the Church of Scotland, never failing to give every public and sensible testimony for the Covenanted cause according to its first institution. By the blessing of God he acquired a plentiful fortune by an assiduity and diligence becoming the man of honour who disdains sordid and avaricious views. As he lived so he died, beloved and esteemed by the good and virtuous."

It was during Cruickshank's term of office that Robert Gordon made application to the Town Council for a feu of the ground in Schoolhill for the purpose of erecting the hospital which he intended to found. The Council, considering the benefit which the bequest would be to the town, had no difficulty in agreeing to Gordon's proposal, but modified the feu-duty to the sum of ten pounds yearly, being prevented from giving the ground in free gift, as the property was held by them in trust.

1730-31.

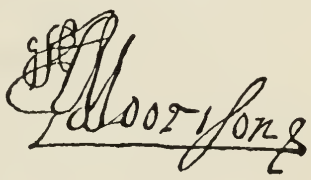
C. James Morison, Senior

(Council Reg., LX., 179, 240).

Nothing is known regarding the parentage of Provost Morison beyond the fact that he was born in 1665, and that, when admitted a burgess of Guild in 1690, he paid dues as an extranean. A reference in a letter written in 1740 points to the belief that the Provost was a native of Donside.

JAMES MORISON, Senior.

On the 29th March, 1692, he married Anna Low, probably a daughter of Robert Low, merchant in Old Aberdeen. The Poll-Book of 1696 gives his stock as 5,000 merks, and shows that the household at that date consisted of himself, his wife, and two sons, Robert and John. Besides these, the other members of his family were:—James, died in infancy; Thomas, baptised 20th April, 1699, merchant in London, admitted as an infant burgess along with his brother Alexander, on 23rd September, 1707; and James, the second of the name, afterwards provost. There were also four daughters—Anna, Jannet, Christian, and Katherine, married, on 10th March, 1748, the Rev. John King, minister of Dyce, and died on the 3rd November, 1761. Provost Morison died in February, 1748, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. The *Journal*, in referring to the death of Provost Morison, records that he departed "with an unblemished character. He behaved himself in every station of life in such a fair, straight way, as procured him the universal love and affection of his fellow-citizens, and his relations have by his death lost a most affectionate parent and sincere friend." A portrait of the Provost, painted by James Alexander, the nephew of Jamesone, is in the possession of George Cadenhead, Esq., advocate, and by his kind permission is here reproduced. On the back of the portrait there is a note in which the Provost is described as being "a zealous friend of the House of Hanover, and a strict adherent of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland as established by law." Anna Low died on the 4th April, 1713, in the forty-first year of her age, and was interred in the family burying-place in S. Nicholas Churchyard.



A resolution of the Council passed in 1731 gives us a good idea of the nature of the majority of houses in the burgh at that date. The Act of Council prohibits in future, under a penalty of fifty pounds, any further building with wooden fronts or having

"stake and rice" chimneys, while heather, straw, or divots were no longer to be allowed as roofing materials. The decay of the old nave of the church of S. Nicholas had become so pronounced by 1730 that the Council shut the church for public worship until they should determine what was best to be done in the matter.

1732-33.

99. WILLIAM CRUICKSHANK

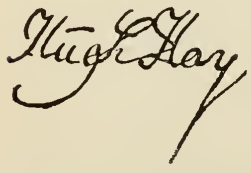
(Council Reg., LX., 296, 334).

1734-35.

CI. **Hugh Hay of Park**

(Council Reg., LX., 366, 394).

Little or no information has been obtained concerning Provost Hay. In May, 1671, John Hay of Park was admitted a burgess of Guild, and on the 21st March, 1705, Hugh, only son in life of John Hay of Brightmoney, was received as a burgess. It is believed that the latter admission refers to the Provost, as no trace of another Hugh Hay appears in the list of burgesses. There is an evident connection between the Provost's family and that of the Hays of Rannieston, but the exact relationship cannot with certainty be stated.



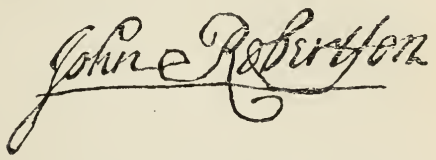
Provost Hay married Isobel Brodie, and had issue, his eldest son, James, being admitted a burgess of Guild on 21st September, 1736. Isobel Brodie died in June, 1738, and was interred in S. Nicholas Churchyard, but the date of the Provost's death has not been ascertained.

1736-37.

CII. John Robertson of Pitmillan

(Council Reg., LX., 438, 491).

Provost John Robertson was born in 1688, and appears to have carried on trade as a merchant in Old Aberdeen prior to his admission as a burgess of the new town on 26th September, 1713. He married Jean Mitchell, a daughter, in all likelihood, of Provost Thomas Mitchell (91), and had issue at least three sons and a daughter. John, the oldest, died a lad of thirteen years on 25th November, 1742; Andrew, who succeeded his father in the estate of Foveran and in the business of a stocking merchant, and married Jean, eldest daughter of Provost William Davidson (110); Thomas, an advocate in Aberdeen, died 13th October, 1757, aged twenty-four years; and Mary, married James Legertwood of Tillery.



The Provost's spouse died on the 1st June, 1735, at the early age of twenty-seven, while he survived her for a period of forty years, having died on the 23rd January, 1776, at the advanced age of eighty-eight years. The secret of his old age is perhaps to be found in the notice regarding his death, where it is stated that he "was not more beloved by his acquaintance for his vivacity and good humour, than esteemed by all for his integrity through life."

The Provost, as already indicated, was a stocking merchant, and his success was such that he first acquired the estate of Pitmillan, and afterwards, about 1757, that of Foveran.

The arms recorded by Robertson of Pitmillan in 1763 were "argent, a chaplet vert, on a chief gules three wolves' heads erased of the first, all within a bordure counter-company of the first and azure."*

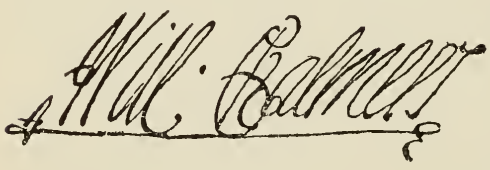
* Ordinary of Scottish Arms.

1738-39.

CIII. **William Chalmers**

(Council Reg., LX., 567, 622).

Provost Chalmers was the eldest son of William Chalmers, born in 1654, by his wife Elizabeth Blair, a daughter of Gilbert Blair, saddler, burgess of the city.* The Provost was born in 1695, and both parents were dead before he reached the civic chair, their deaths having occurred on the 21st August, 1710, and the 20th December, 1733, respectively. Chalmers married Helen Mollison, by whom he had the following children:—William, baptised in 1726, died in infancy; Vera, or Veronica, baptised 28th December, 1727, married James Cumming of Breda on 26th October, 1748, and died on the 23rd September, 1758; Alexander, baptised 23rd May, 1729, described as late of Antigua at his death, which occurred at Peterhead on 9th January, 1778; William, the second of the name, was collector of Customs in Shetland; John, described as of Antigua, died at the age of twenty-two, in 1757;† and Helen and Christian, who died in infancy. The Provost died on the morning of the 29th March, 1770, aged seventy-five years, his lady having died some four years previously—viz., on the 5th of May, 1766, aged sixty-one. The following sketch of the Provost, although pitched in rather a high key, was written by a contemporary, and may serve to give an idea of the respect in which he was held:—"William Chalmers, Esq., who has been twice provost and chief magistrate of this city, possessed of every virtue which could make him eminent and conspicuous in the various stations he filled, both in social and domestic life. He justly attracted the love and esteem of



* Titles of Burgh Property. † Gentleman's Magazine.

WILLIAM CHALMERS.

all. Clearness of judgment, integrity of conduct, benevolence of heart, steady and disinterested friendship, and extensive charity were regularly displayed through his whole life; and his unaffected piety, while it gave himself the constant smiles of a good conscience, adorned all his virtues. The Poor's Hospital and Infirmary, the most useful and extensive charity foundations in this place and the north of Scotland, of both of which he was a zealous promoter, will be lasting monuments of his public spirit, and preserve and endear his memory to many generations." *

Of the two institutions referred to in the foregoing notice of the Provost, the Infirmary was originated in 1738, while he was in office, and before his term expired in 1740, he was able to lay the foundation-stone of the new institution, while the Poor's Hospital was founded in terms of a resolution adopted on the 17th February, 1739, as a measure likely to "promote religion, suppress vice, propagate industry and virtue, and be a general benefit to society." †

On the 18th June, 1741, the Council agreed "that Provost Chalmers' picture should be drawn on the town's charge, and put up in the Town-House, in gratitude to him for his generously selling all Halheads farms for the use of the Poor at six pounds eight shillings Scots per boll." This transaction evidently refers to his selling meal at a reduction for the benefit of the poor of the burgh, who were at this particular time in sore need of help owing to the great scarcity of provisions. The carrying out of the Council's resolution was entrusted to John Alexander, as is attested by the following entry in the accounts for the same year:—"Item paid to John Alexander for Drawing Provost Chalmers' picture, by order of the Council, and that as a token of gratitude for his great charity to the poor in giving Halheads whole farm to the Town at a low price, £72." ‡

* *Aberdeen Journal.* † An Aberdeen Benevolence, by Alex. Walker, LL.D.
‡ Guildry Accounts.

For fully fifteen years the picture hung in the laigh Council House, but in June, 1756, the Provost presented the following curious petition to the Council regarding it:—"Anent the petition of William Chalmers, late provost, shewing that in June, 1741, the Town Council were pleased to order the petitioner's picture to be drawn at the town's charge, and to be put up in the Town-House for the reasons specified in the Act of Council made thereanent. Which picture has accordingly hung hitherto in the laigh Council Room, but as there is no other gentleman's picture hangs in the said room, the said picture looks somewhat singular, and strangers frequently make inquiry for whom the same is done, and, therefore, craving permission for their Honours to transport said picture to the Infirmary, to be put up in the Directors' Hall. Which petition, signed by the Petitioner, being considered by the Council, they grant the desire thereof, and allow him to put up said picture in the Hall of the Infirmary."* The portrait, of which a representation is here given, is still in the custody of the Infirmary Managers, and now hangs in the treasurer's room in Exchange Street.

The Provost was a merchant carrying on a trade in general merchandise, and a return of his trade for the year from Martinmas, 1742, to Martinmas, 1743, shows how the trade of the burgh had begun to change its direction. Formerly by far the largest amount of exports went to the Continent through the staple port of Campvere, but by 1742, chiefly as the result of the Union, the great bulk of the export trade was to London. The total value of the exports returned by the Provost for the year 1742-43 was £24,498 Scots, of which £16,426 went to London, £6,197 to Campvere, £1,215 to Hamburg, and £659 to Leith. The London goods were carried either by coach or the smack Unity, while the names of the other vessels include the following:—Muckle Jean, Charming Pegie, Codfisher, Speedwell, Indian Queen, &c.†

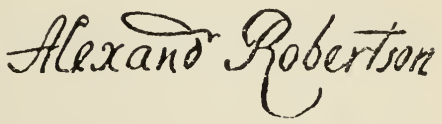
* Council Reg., LXII., 128. † MS. Return.

1740-41.

CIV. Alexander Robertson of Glasgocgo

(Council Reg., LX., 654; LXI., 3).

Provost Alexander Robertson was the son of Baillie James Robertson, either by his first wife, whose name has not been placed in record on the family burying-ground in S. Nicholas Churchyard, or by his second wife, Jean Ross. The Baillie died in February, 1730, and his second wife in December, 1739. Provost Robertson was born in 1702, and married for his first wife Jean Strachan, by whom he had nine of a family.



Six of these died in infancy—four, viz., John, Helen, Margaret, and James, having died within the months of November and December, 1736. The children who reached maturity were—Elizabeth, born 1727, married Dr. Robert Pollock, Principal and Professor of Divinity in Marischal College, died 28th November, 1753; Alexander, born in 1732, described as of Blackchambers, who died 27th September, 1793; and Jean, born in 1736, married Alexander Lumsden, advocate, and died 10th May, 1773. Jean Strachan, the Provost's first wife, died on the 24th December, 1746, and he thereafter married as his second wife Jean Rose, of the family of Kilravock, who survived him, having died on the 8th August, 1784, at the advanced age of eighty-two years. Provost Robertson died on the 26th November, 1775, in the seventy-third year of his age.*

On the north side of the Upperkirkgate there still stands the house built by the Provost for his town residence. Above the doorway, which enters off Ross's Court, there is an elaborately-carved slab with the arms of Robertson, the motto, "Robore et Sapore," flanked by the date 1730, and on a scroll the names of

* Tombstone, S. Nicholas Churchyard.

the Provost and his wife, Jean Strachan. Douglas, in his "East Coast," gives the credit to Provost Robertson for the idea of showing how the public funds might be improved. He says "the idea of the improvement of the public funds was the more cherished from a little experiment in agriculture which Alexander Robertson of Glasgoego, then provost, made a few years before. He rented an acre and a sixth of ground in the Lochlands, on the west side of the town, at three pounds ten shillings per whole. The first crop of grass was of little value, being foul with every kind of weed, but for three succeeding years the crops were so luxuriant that, being let in small lots, this little spot brought a rent of ten pounds sterling annually."

1742-43.

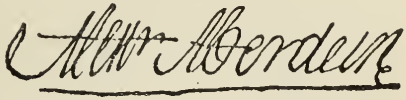
CV. Alexander Aberdein, Yr. of Cairnbulg

(*Council Reg.*, *LXI.*, 84, 122).

Provost Aberdein was a son of Alexander Aberdein of Cairnbulg, merchant in Aberdeen, by his wife Elspet Ross, eldest sister of Provost John Ross (95), and was born in 1710. He married, in 1739, his cousin, Jean Ross, the youngest daughter of Provost John Ross, and the issue of this marriage was an only daughter, Jean, who married in March, 1761, David Dalrymple, advocate and Sheriff-Depute of Aberdeenshire. He was afterwards raised to the bench in 1777, with the title of Lord Westhall. The Provost's wife died soon after the birth of her daughter in October, 1740, and his second wife, Mary Burnett, the second daughter of the laird of Leys, died in March, 1748, as also did her infant son Alexander. The Provost's third marriage is thus described:—"24th April, 1750. Alexander Aberdein of Cairnbulg, late provost of this city, was married at Montrose to Miss Nelly Carnegie, sister to Sir James Carnegie of Pitarrow, a young lady of celebrated beauty and distinguished merit." A son by this marriage, Alexander Aberdein, became a merchant in Calcutta, and died in England in 1826 in the

seventy-sixth year of his age. He was twice married, and the last survivor of a numerous family, Christian Carnegie Aberdein, died at London on the 15th February, 1894, aged eighty years.

Provost Aberdein, while still in the prime of life, died on the 24th June, 1756, in the forty-sixth year of his age. He had evidently during the course of his public life earned the esteem and respect of his fellow-burgesses, for in referring to his death it was remarked that "the loss of a member so valuable in life is to be felt, not only among his nearest connections,



but persons of distinction, the merchant, the sailor, the tradesman, and, in short, every man of worth and industry, will long lament the loss of a gentleman who, with a good heart, had one of the soundest heads, constantly and usefully employed in the offices of society, commerce, and hospitality, and who, taken either in the character of the gentleman or the merchant, was equal'd but by few of his Time. Let his friends, nevertheless, in this be comforted that he has left behind him so much honour, and that good name which he preferred to riches." On the day of interment the bells in the city began to toll at one o'clock, while minute guns were fired from S. Catherine's Hill till five o'clock. The description of the funeral ceremony concludes as follows:—"The pall was supported by six provosts, the present provost being one of the number, and placed on the right hand of the chief mourner. Thus attended and accompanied by a great many gentlemen of distinction in town and county, they proceeded to the churchyard, where the interment was notified by a round of nine guns, which closed the doleful ceremony."

The estate and castle of Cairnbulg, which is presently being restored, was purchased by the Provost's father from Colonel John Buchan of Auchmacoy in 1739. The arms recorded by the Aberdein family were gules, a chevron argent, between three mullets or.

It was during the period from 1740 to 1746 that the infamous

system of kidnapping was at its height in Aberdeen. The story has been so often told that it need not be repeated here, although it may be remarked that the system was encouraged by many of the prominent citizens who had interests in the vessels trading to the West Indies. The Rebellion of 1745, and more especially the public indignation excited by the publication of Peter Williamson's pamphlet, put an end to the trade. In December, 1743, during the last year of Provost Aberdein's term of office, the Council had under consideration the style of dress to be worn by the provost. Their inquiries in the matter showed that in the principal cities the provost was in the habit of wearing black velvet clothes, "which the Council judge decent, and that the chief magistrate of every principall town ought to have a distinction in their dress, and that black velvet they judge a very decent habit." The unanimous finding of the Council was therefore in favour of the chief magistrate of the city wearing in future a black velvet suit, "mounted with a gold button or not, as the provost for the time should incline." This suggestion of the Council—for, of course, it could have no other meaning—was acted on only for a very short time.

1744-45.

CVI. James Morison, Jun., of Elsick

(Council Reg., LXI., 175, 215, 220).

Provost James Morison was the fifth son of Provost Morison (100), by his wife Anna Low, and was born in 1708. He married, probably in 1740, Isobell Dyce, the eldest daughter of James Dyce of Disblair, merchant in Aberdeen. The family of this marriage consisted of five sons and eleven daughters. Of the

sons James and William Augustus died in infancy; Alexander served an apprenticeship to James Jopp, afterwards provost, and died in early life;* Thomas and George only reaching a mature age. Thomas was an army surgeon, and served during the American war, and on his retirement succeeded to his aunt's property of Disblair, and also bought back the paternal property of Elsick which had been sold. Dr. Thomas Morison is also well remembered for the interest he took in the medicinal springs at Strathpeffer, in Ross-shire, the result of his labours being that they obtained no little repute as the Bath of Scotland. His portrait, painted by George Watson of Edinburgh still hangs in the pump-room at the Strath. The younger brother, who survived, was George, who, entering the ministry, was licensed to preach, 3rd January, 1782, and in the following year settled as minister at Oyne. Two years later he was translated to Banchory-Devenick, where, during a long ministry of sixty-one years, he was held in the highest respect by his parishioners. By the entail executed by his brother, he succeeded, on his death in 1824, to the estates of Elsick and Disblair. In the same year Mr. Morison received the degree of D.D., and at his death on 13th July, 1845, when in the sixty-third year of his ministry, he held the title of "Father of the Church of Scotland." Dr. Morison's benefactions to the parish of Banchory-Devenick were on a very liberal scale—a bridge over the Dee for the convenience of the residenters on the north part of the parish alone cost £1,400.

Of the Provost's daughters, Helen died unmarried on 2nd November, 1840, in the 86th year of her age; Agnes, married, 17th June, 1754, Robert Farquhar of Newhall, merchant in Aberdeen, and father of Rear-Admiral Sir Arthur Farquhar;

* In a letter of introduction, dated 30th September, 1772, from William Young to Charles Donaldson, tobacconist, London, the bearer, young Morison, is thus described—"This lad does not make any great appearance, but his capacity, ability, honesty, and good nature far exceeds those that has greater appearances."

Amelia married the Rev. Dr. Sherrifs, one of the city ministers; Jean married Dr. Robert Hamilton, Professor of Mathematics in Marischal College; Janet married Dr. Arthur Dingwall Fordyce of Culsh; Anne married, first, the Rev. John Farquhar, minister of Nigg, and, secondly, the Rev. Alexander Mearns, of Towie and Cluny; Isobell married James Abercromby of Bellfield, and died 16th May, 1809, in her seventy-sixth year; Mary married Rev. John Hutcheon, of Fetteresso; Katherine married the Rev. David Forbes, of Laurencekirk; Sophia died in infancy; and Rachel died aged seventeen years. Through these various marriages the descendants of Provost Morison in the third and fourth generation are now pretty numerous. The Provost's lady died on the 23rd January, 1781, aged sixty-four years, and the Provost himself on the 5th January, 1786, while he was in the seventy-eighth year of his age. He was interred in S. Nicholas Churchyard, where a marble stone underneath the present main walk preserves the record of the deaths of three generations of the family. Portraits of Provost Morison are in possession of Mrs. Miller Morrison of Morrison House, Hetland, and the Rev. Duncan G. Mearns, Oyne, both of whom are descendants. It will be observed from the dates given above that Provost Morison was only thirty-six years of age when he was called upon to fill the civic chair, and, considering the nature of the times it was perhaps as well that the troubles connected with the office should have fallen on a comparatively young man.

So early as the spring of 1744 the Council had presented an address to the King regarding the information which His Majesty had communicated to both Houses of Parliament as to a threatened invasion "in favour of a Popish pretender." On the 31st August, 1745, at a meeting of the Council, held on that day, it was resolved to put the town in a posture of defence in consideration "that there is ane insurrection in the Highlands." Lists of all the fencible men, with the number of arms and quantities of ammunition, were accordingly drawn up, and the whole divided into twelve companies, with officers named and appointed by the

Council. Sir John Cope, having missed the rebels in the north, entered the burgh on the 11th September with over two thousand men and encamped at the Dove Cot Brae, where Union Terrace Gardens now are. Two days later Provost Morison convened the Council for the purpose of informing them that Sir John Cope had represented to him the necessity of dismantling the fort at the harbour mouth and taking the cannon south with him to Edinburgh. A further question as to transporting the small arms was delayed for consideration until the following day, when the burgesses should be consulted. At this meeting the Provost represented that he had had another conversation with Sir John Cope, who had made it clear that if the burgesses retained the arms in the town, and they fell into the hands of the enemy, "the town would lay themselves obnoxious to the Government, and made answerable for such conduct." In view of this statement the meeting refused to take the responsibility, and so the whole small arms, cannon, and ammunition were carried south in Cope's transports on the 15th September, and the burgh was left entirely without the means of defence. The 25th September was the day of the election, and the meeting held in the forenoon for the choosing of the new Council was not interrupted, and the usual adjournment till three o'clock was made so as to enable the old and new Council to meet for the election of the office-bearers for the ensuing year. The meeting had, however, scarcely dispersed before John Hamilton, chamberlain to the Duke of Gordon, along with a company of foot and horse, occupied the town, being joined by many of the citizens who had waited for such an opportunity to declare themselves. Having obtained possession of the keys of the Market Cross, a detachment was sent in search of Provost Morison, who only appeared on the visit of a second party with orders to burn his house, unless he delivered himself up. Finding himself in such a dilemma, the Provost had no other course open but to comply, and he was accordingly "carried down prisoner, with drawn swords and other weapons, to the town-house." Having by this time laid hands on other two of the Magistrates,

and one or two members of the Council, the rebels made them ascend to the platform on the top of the cross, when James Petrie, Sheriff-Substitute of Aberdeen, read the manifestos of the Pretender, and thereafter he was toasted as James VIII. Not content with pledging the Pretender themselves, they endeavoured to make the Provost drink also, but he firmly resisted, and, as the next best thing, they poured the wine down his breast. Provost Morison's own account of the proceedings is given in a letter which he addressed to Lord President Forbes on the 10th October, 1745 :—"On the 25th past, I was seized upon by an armed party of Highlandmen, violently forced down to the cross, and there, with some broadswords over my head, I was obliged to stand till their proclamation was read; and because I refused to drink a health they proposed, I had a glass of wine spilt down my breast—in so far they got what they aimed at, but sure it was no advantage to their cause. I hope I shall ever esteem it my greatest honour, as Providence shall give me opportunity, to be equally faithful in the discharge of my duty in my station under the present happy establishment." The President replied on the 19th of the same month as follows :—"The usage you met with at your cross and your resolute behaviour I had formerly heard; nor need you doubt that it shall be properly represented in due time. The discontinuance of your election is what you could not help under the then circumstances. The good people must at present live in the most neighbourly way they can, as none, I believe, would choose to act." It was doubtless the resolute stand which Provost Morison made at the cross on the day of the election that earned for him the sobriquet of "Provost Positive." President Forbes was not far wrong when he believed that none would care to accept office as councillors, for the Provost, and several other members of the former Council took the earliest opportunity to quit the burgh, the management of which fell into the hands of Lord Lewis Gordon, Lord-Lieutenant of Aberdeen and Banff, who held it for Prince Charles, appoint-

ing William Moir of Lonmay as Deputy-Lieutenant and Governor of Aberdeen.

The occupation of the burgh by the rebel forces continued until February, 1746, when the approach of the Duke of Cumberland's army made them go further north, until the final stand was made at Culloden on the 16th April. Cumberland arrived in the city on the 27th February, two days after the rebels quitted it, and among the first acts which he did was to place the burgh under the management of twelve citizens, among whom the name of Provost Morison appears, along with that of other five ex-provosts. During a stay extending over a period of six weeks the Duke was made much of by the citizens, and was enrolled a free burgess of the burgh. After Culloden, the governors whom Cumberland had appointed transmitted a petition to the King praying that a royal warrant should be issued for a new election of magistracy, so that the government of the burgh might be put on a proper footing. The Privy Council, however, to whom the petition was referred, ordained the proceedings at the election of Michaelmas, 1745, to be taken up at the point where they were interrupted, and so on the 9th July, 1746, the old and new Council met at three o'clock in the afternoon and elected office-bearers in the usual manner as if no interregnum of nine months had taken place.

Thus ended the rebellion of 1745 so far as the burgh was concerned, and the lists recently published, containing the names of those who were "out in the '45," show clearly that the rising was not countenanced, so far as the towns were concerned, by many of the burgess class. On the day of the election the old and new Council unanimously agreed that the burgess ticket of the Duke of Cumberland should be drawn out "in the genteelest form" and forwarded to His Royal Highness in a gold box of the best fashion, and this was accordingly done at the cost of the Guildry funds.*

* Cf. Historical Papers, I., *XXXV.*

1746-47.

103. WILLIAM CHALMERS

(Council Reg., LXI., 238, 304).

During these years, there was a movement set on foot for the union of King's and Marischal Colleges, in which the Council took considerable interest. While perfectly willing that such a union should take place, the Council's consent was given on the express condition that the seat of the University was to be situated in the burgh, and not in the Old Town. The Council stated five reasons for this course, the last of which may be quoted as, perhaps, comprehending the other four :—" 5th—The town of Aberdeen looks upon it as a considerable addition to its lustre and dignity to have a University situate in the heart of the town, where the provost, baillies, and councill had such a great interest and concern, and where the inhabitants' children can be taught under the inspection of their parents at a very small expence."

In April, 1747, the Council made a representation to Government for payment of the cannon and arms taken south by Sir John Cope, as also for reparation on account of the damage done to Robert Gordon's Hospital while occupied by Cumberland's troops ; and in this they were successful, for Provost Chalmers was able some six months later to report that an order had been received for payment of the full sum claimed.

1748-49.

104. ALEXANDER ROBERTSON OF GLASGOEGO,

(Council Reg., LXI., 355, 415).

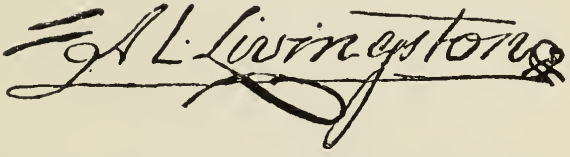
1750-51.

CVII. Alexander Livingstone of Countesswells

(Council Reg., LXI., 490, 569).

Provost Livingstone was the second son of Baillie Alexander Livingstone of Fornet, in the parish of Skene, by his wife,

Margaret Symson, who died on the 27th May, 1721, aged twenty-nine. Baillie Livingstone died on the 8th July, 1733, aged fifty-two years. The Provost, who was admitted a burgess on 22nd September, 1730, was twice married, his first wife being a daughter of Dr. Hugh Kennedy, while his second wife was a daughter of John Hardie, merchant in Aberdeen. By these marriages the Provost left issue. He appears to have at one time carried on business as a merchant in Rotterdam, where he acquired a considerable fortune. On returning to his native city, he invested part of his wealth in the lands of Countesswells, which he purchased in 1750, besides which he feued from the Town Council two years later part of the lands of Gilcomston, known as the sixth lot, and comprehending the district where Beechgrove Terrace and Whitehall Road are now situated. In the same year as he feued these lands, he, along with several others, started a linen manufactory at the Porthill. The partners of the Porthill Company (afterwards Milne, Cruden, & Co.), besides the Provost, were John Dingwall, William Mackenzie, Alexander Milne, jun., and Andrew Walker. Having secured a piece of ground at the Porthill, they erected a building for the purposes of the manufactory, which still stands at the Gallowgate entrance to Seamount Place. The concerns of this Company went from bad to worse, with the result that about 1764 the whole of the Provost's estate had to be realised to pay his creditors.



The arms borne by the Provost were argent, three cinquefoils, gules within a double tressure counter-flory vert, in the fess point a cross, crosslet fitchée sable.

During the period of office under review, the Council had under consideration a proposal by one John Gorsach, asking permission to open a coal mine on the lands of Torry, held by

the town as trustees for various mortifications. Negotiations took place, and a settlement was arrived at by which Gorsach agreed to take a lease of three nineteen years of all coals and metals on the lands in question, to work the same at his own charges, and, in name of rent, to give the Council one-twelfth of all metals and one-fourteenth of coals.* No further reference is made to the subject in the Council Register, and it is to be feared that the project was never carried out, although the Council do not appear to have given up the idea of getting coal in the immediate neighbourhood of the town. Some ten years later they bore, mutually with the Governors of Robert Gordon's Hospital, the cost of sinking a shaft on the lands of Findon, in the belief that coal could be found there. A more extended knowledge of the geology of the district made it apparent that the search was of necessity a futile one. The Council, under Provost Livingstone, carried out great improvements at the Town-House, and practically constructed the building as it appeared during the early part of the present century, and which is so familiar to us from the prints of Castle Street of that date. Another matter which occupied the attention of the Council at this time was the providing and retailing of meal for the citizens. A succession of bad harvests had again brought famine very near to the homes of the poorer section of the burgesses, and it was only by the intervention of the Council that a sufficient supply of meal at reasonable charges could be obtained. In carrying out the work connected with the purchase and distribution of the meal, Provost Livingstone appears to have made many enemies, and to have displeased a large party in the Council. On the 1st October, 1753, James Smith, saddler, and late deacon-convener of the Incorporated Trades, was charged with injuring Livingstone's character by stating publicly in the street that the Provost was the principal cause of the high price of meal in 1752. A jury

* Council Reg., LXI., 498.

was empanelled at ten o'clock at night, and gave their verdict the following morning at the same hour as follows:—"We all with one voice find it proven that Provost Livingstone concurred with the Town Council of Aberdeen in every measure taken by them for providing the city with meal, and that he retailed meal of his own cheaper than what it was given in town during the last year's dearth, and find the injurious expression uttered by the said James Smith, in presence of John Copland, proven as libelled."* After such a finding, the only course open to the ex-convener was to appear at the bar and publicly beg the Provost's pardon, which he did, and was thereupon dismissed. The action and the finding caused considerable talk in the town, and some injudicious reflections made by the *Aberdeen Journal* regarding the trial was the occasion of a copy of the paper containing the obnoxious remarks being burned at the cross, by the hands of the hangman, in virtue of an order of the Court.

1752-53.

106. JAMES MORISON, Jun., of Elsick

(Council Reg., LXI., 650; *LXII*, 5).

At the Michaelmas election in 1752, the feeling against Livingstone was very strong, so much so that one half of the Council refused to take any part in the election. The Council, as already indicated, consisted of nineteen members, but one of the number was abroad at the time of the election, and the remaining eighteen were equally divided for and against the policy carried out by Livingstone, and by their staying away no election by a majority could take place. The intention, evidently, of the opposition was to force a compromise and get an arrangement of terms with the opposite party, but in this they were disappointed, for Livingstone, by the aid of a notary, summoned

* *Aberdeen Journal.*

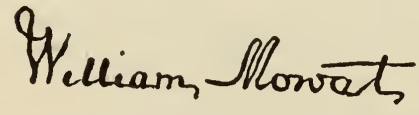
them to the election, proceeded with it in their absence, and placed Morison in the chair as provost. No sooner was the election completed than a summons of reduction was raised by the opposing faction on the ground that the election was not valid, while a counter action was raised by the provost's party against the remaining members of the Council for wilfully absenting themselves, and for a time it seemed that a most unseemly wrangle would take place in the law courts. Better councils, however, prevailed, and both sections accepted the Earl of Findlater as arbiter, with the result that he managed to reconcile parties, the mutual processes were discharged, and the election held as good. A memento probably of this incident in the civic history of the burgh is the couple of portraits of the earl and his countess which hung for long in the Council Chamber, and are now placed in the Town and County Hall. The earl also, in his capacity of Vice-Admiral of Scotland, conferred several benefits on the city, which entitled him to the gratitude of the burgesses.

1754-55.

CVIII. William Mowat of Colpnay

(Council Reg., LXII., 42, 94).

Provost Mowat was in all probability the eldest son of William Mowat, merchant, and was admitted a burgess on 25th September, 1722. A relation of the Provost's was George Mowat, at one time Dean of Guild, who died on the 4th February, 1757, aged eighty-three years, and of whom it was remarked that, "as he dealt in a fair trade, he died in a fair character." Provost Mowat was married to Jane Osborn, a daughter of Principal John Osborn, of Marischal College. She died at Shannaburn on the 17th March, 1786. Of the



marriage there were at least three sons—William, who was admitted as an "infant" burgess on 21st September, 1742; John, admitted 23rd September, 1746; and Andrew, admitted 23rd September, 1755.

The Provost, in a return of his trade for the year from Michaelmas, 1742, to Michaelmas, 1743, stated it at £1,375 sterling, the details of which show clearly how the burgh was fast losing its commercial connection with the Low Countries, and forming a new trade with London. For goods sold at home, the return gives only £120 10s., while £1,110 was the value exported to London, from whence goods to the value of £81 were imported, while the balance is made up of £63 10s. imports from Holland. Besides his business, the Provost was one of the originators of the first bank in Aberdeen, which was floated somewhere about 1752, but the concern was never a success, and seems to have been the cause of ruin to more than one of the partners. There are sufficient indications that the firm of William Mowat & Co. lost credit about the time of the discontinuance of the bank, and that the embarrassment of the firm continued for some considerable time thereafter.

During Provost Mowat's term of office several important measures were before the Council, including, among others, a renewal of the negotiations for a union of the Colleges into one University. The matter was one in which the Earl of Findlater took some interest, and the crucial point of the whole question, viz., where the seat of the University should be located, was referred to him, with the result that he gave a deliverance in favour of it being in the burgh, as against the opposing claim for its location at King's College, in Old Aberdeen. No progress towards a settlement, however, appears to have been made. The finishing and re-opening, on the 9th November, 1755, of the West Church of S. Nicholas also occupied the consideration of the Council, nearly thirty years having elapsed since the old nave had been allowed to fall into a ruinous condition, and rendered unfit for worship.

1756-57.

104. ALEXANDER ROBERTSON OF GLASGOEGO

(*Council Reg., LXII.*, 142, 177).

The principal work carried out by the Council during these years was the erection of a new Grammar School a little to the west of the old school in Schoolhill, on the site now occupied by Gray's School of Art. The building then erected was the school of Byron, Beattie, and many other celebrated persons. During these two years also the city was equipped with one of the best hostelries between this and Edinburgh. The New Inn was built by the Mason Lodge of Aberdeen on ground feued from the Council in Castle Street for the purpose of providing a first-class inn, and also accommodation for the meetings of the Society.

1758-59.

CIX. John Duncan of Mosstoun

(*Council Reg., LXII.*, 226, 266).

Provost Duncan was the second son of William Duncan, baker burgess, who died 18th December, 1752, by his wife Euphemia Kirkwood, who died 1st October, 1740. The Provost was himself admitted as a craftsman of the baker trade on 4th September, 1742, and five years later, on 15th August, 1747, he was admitted a burgess of Guild. He married (contract of marriage, 21st September, 1747) Margaret Wight, and had issue one son and three daughters—William, who died in London, 7th September, 1772; Euphemia, who gave up her father's will on 4th February, 1799; Helen, married on 3rd October, 1787, to

JOHN DUNCAN

OF MOSSTOUN.

the Rev. Gilbert Gerard, minister of the English Church at Amsterdam, and afterwards Professor of Divinity at King's College; and Elizabeth, who died at Old Aberdeen in December, 1832. Provost Duncan died at his house in Old Aberdeen on the 20th December, 1798, in the eightieth year of his age, and his widow died on 21st June, 1802, aged eighty-four years.

On the death of Miss Gerard, of Old Aberdeen, a granddaughter of the Provost, about ten years ago, a series of five portraits were given by her executor to the Town Council of Old Aberdeen, and these have latterly come into the possession of the Town Council of Aberdeen. Two of the portraits represent the Provost as a boy, and again, while in office, if we judge from the black velvet coat in which he is attired, and is that from which the accompanying representation is taken, while the other three paintings represent the Provost's wife and his father and mother.

The Provost at one time lived in a house on the south side of the Upperkirkgate, which he built for himself, but latterly he seems to have made his residence in Old Aberdeen. He had also a country house on the estate of Drumside, Belhelvie, which, along with Blairton and Hopeshill in the same parish, he held at the time of his death. The estate of Mosstoun, in the parish of Logie-Buchan, Duncan held for a short time only, as he acquired it in 1761 from Margaret Innes, wife of Richard Surridge, of Dublin, and sold it in 1767 to Peter Gordon of Ballaterach, and Charles Gordon, his only son, in which family it remained till 1896. A John Duncan, of Aberdeen, most probably the Provost, recorded arms (no date) as follows:—Gules, a chevron between a saltire, inter two talbots' heads collared in chief, and a sinister hand in base couped argent; a mullet for difference.

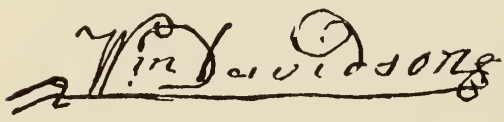
As an example of how different the shipping of a century ago was from that of the present day, it may be mentioned that during Duncan's tenure of office the Council had to assert their rights to the anchorage and landing dues of vessels discharging at Donmouth.

1760-61.

CX. **William Davidson**

(Council Reg., LXII., 292, 319).

Provost Davidson, like so many of those who filled the civic chair, was a merchant in the burgh, and was born in the closing years of the seventeenth century, and seems to be the same person who was admitted a burgess on 7th August, 1745, upon payment of a modified composition, in respect he had married the daughter of a burgess. By his marriage with Violet Robertson he had the following children:—



Jean, the eldest daughter, married on 11th February, 1765, Andrew Robertson, younger of Pitmillan; Elizabeth, married in 1767 to Alexander Innes of Breda and Cowie, advocate, became the mother of James Hadden, afterwards provost, and died 8th July, 1795, aged forty-eight years; Hannah, the youngest, married on 26th February, 1792, Dr. Alexander Robertson of Hazlehead, and died on the 8th February, 1826, in the seventy-sixth year of her age; James, designed of Midmar, who died unmarried, 26th January, 1777, aged thirty-one years; and Helen, married in 1769 to Alexander Carnegie, town clerk. Provost Davidson died on the 3rd May, 1765, after a tedious illness, in his sixty-seventh year, admired for "the strict integrity which he maintained unblemished, his sincerity and warmth in friendship, and his regularity in religious and virtuous practice, which procured for him the love of those who knew him while he lived, and make his death to be regretted."* Mrs. Davidson survived her husband for many years, having died on the 23rd December, 1790, in the seventy-seventh year of her age.

* *Aberdeen Journal.*

On the day of Davidson's election the double Council, which elected the office-bearers for the year, passed the following resolution :—"The said day the double Council taking under their consideration the frequent proposals formerly made that the Magistrates of this city should wear some proper badge of distinction, so that their office should be known on all occasions, they therefore unanimously agreed that the Provost should wear a gold chain in the same form with that of the Lord Provost of Edinburgh ; and appointed the Dean of Guild to provide the same. And the double Council statute and ordained that the said gold chain shall be worn by all succeeding provosts, and the Council further ordain that in case it's agreeable to the other Magistrates, that they be provided with gold chains also in the same form with those of the Magistrates of Edinburgh."

The proposal was carried out only as regards the provost, when the present chain worn by the Lord Provost was purchased at a cost to the Dean of Guild's Casualty Fund of £47 7s.

1762-63.

109. JOHN DUNCAN of Mosstoun

(Council Reg., LXII., 346, 365).

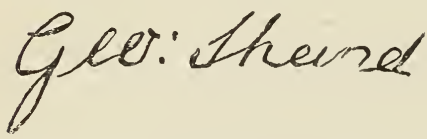
1764-65.

CXI. **George Shand**

(Council Reg., LXIII., 22, 39).

Provost Shand came of a family, the heads of which during the two previous generations had been ministers of the Church of Scotland. His grandfather was John Shand, minister at Premnay (167 -1704), while the Provost was one of three children born to James Shand, minister at Kintore (1718-26),

by his wife, Barbara Leith. Provost Shand appears to have twice married, his first wife being Jean Marr, a daughter of David Marr, merchant in Aberdeen. After her death, on the 30th September, 1767, he married Margaret Gordon, the second daughter of Sir Francis Gordon of Lesmoir. A tablet to her memory is erected on the east wall of the vault of the Gordons of Kinellar, in the churchyard of Fraserburgh.* Provost Shand died at Aberdeen on the 14th of October, 1792.



During the last year of office, viz., in 1766, the Council had under consideration the question of obtaining an additional supply of water for the burgh, and after various schemes had been submitted for their consideration, it was resolved to tap several additional springs at Gilcomston, and bring the water into a reservoir to be erected in Broad Street. The old waterhouse situated there is still a characteristic "bit" in the architecture of that thoroughfare.

1766-67.

109. JOHN DUNCAN of Mosstoun

(Council Reg., LXIII., 61, 86).

During these two years the Council projected an improvement in the accesses to the harbour by forming Marischal Street, which necessitated the removal of two very interesting houses—Marischal's Lodging, the town house of the Earl Marischal, and Pitfoddel's Lodging, the "stane house" of the Menzies' family, erected in 1530 or thereby.

During 1768 a scarcity of victual produced the usual distress, and there were several serious "meal" riots, which had to be suppressed by military force.

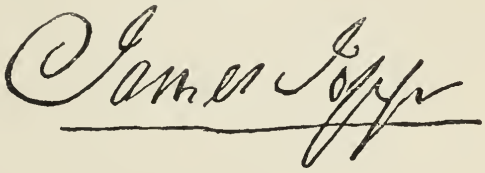
* Surname of Shand.

1768-69.

CXII. **James Jopp of Cotton**

(Council Reg., LXIII., 114, 136).

Provost James Jopp was a native of the Garioch, and a tombstone in the parish churchyard of Insch records the deaths of his immediate forbears. The inscription on the tombstone is to the effect that James Jopp, feuar in Insch, departed this life in August, 1672, and that "Here lyes Andrew Jopp, sometime merchant in Insch, who died February 26th, 17-2, aged 67 years, and his children, Alexander, Andrew, and Mary Jopp."* This Andrew, merchant at Insch, is believed to have been the father of the Provost. Provost Jopp was born in 1721, and on the 27th August, 1744, he was admitted a burgess of Guild of Aberdeen. He married, in 1751, Jean Moir, second daughter of Rev. George Moir, latterly in Kintore, by his wife Jean Forbes. The issue of this marriage was the following children:—James, who succeeded to the estate of Cotton, and sold it in 1797; Alexander, described as of Kingston, in Jamaica, who died on the 26th January, 1798; Nancy, who died unmarried on the 18th December, 1796; Jean, born in 1755, married 24th January, 1799, to Gavin Young, merchant in London, and died in 1836; Jessie, married on 10th April, 1795, to John Barnes of East Finchley, Middlesex, and died the 15th November, 1848;† and Andrew, advocate in Aberdeen, designed of Elmhill, who died the 9th June, 1829, aged sixty years.



The Provost carried on business as a wine and cloth merchant, and appears to have made a considerable fortune, with part of

* Epitaphs and Inscriptions, I., 21. † Houses of Moir and Byres, 15.

which he purchased in 1776 the lands of Cotton, near Aberdeen, from Lady Diana Middleton. Provost Jopp died on the 7th July, 1794, in the seventy-third year of his age, and was interred in S. Nicholas Churchyard. Mrs. Jopp predeceased her husband, having died on the 18th March, 1782, aged fifty-two years. The character of the Provost is summed up in the following obituary notice:—"He for many years filled the office of chief magistrate of this city with much benefit to the community and credit to himself; by unremitting attention to business, joined to the strictest probity and honour, he acquired an ample fortune. He was a tender and affectionate parent, a steadfast friend, and an agreeable companion. He lived respected and died lamented by a numerous acquaintance."

James Jopp, the eldest son of the Provost, recorded arms in 1796 as follows—gules, a garb or, on a chief argent, a ship in full sail on a sea proper.

During Provost Jopp's tenure of office the Council took action to remove a cause of complaint which had been of long standing, and had come before them on more than one occasion. This was the removal of the three remaining ports of the burgh, viz., the Netherkirkgate, Gallowgate, and Justice Ports. These ancient gateways had become a great obstruction to vehicular traffic, and the Council, recognising this, ordered the demolition of the two last-named ports at once, and the removal of the Netherkirkgate port, if at all practicable. The difficulties in the way, however, prevented the removal of the latter port at that time, and it was not taken down until 1793.

In 1769 an important alteration took place in the holding of burgh property, which was so far a concession to the progressive spirit of the times. Prior to this date, all heritable property, including the salmon fishings in Dee and Don, could only be held by the heirs male of the last possessor, thus necessitating the transfer by sale when the heir was a female. In this year, however, the Council agreed, on payment of certain compositions, to grant new charters of the various properties

to be held of heirs whomsoever, and not a few of the town's vassals took advantage of the concession.

1770-71.

111. GEORGE SHAND

(Council Reg., LXIII., 171, 189).

During these years the Council were busy with schemes for the improvement of the harbour, and for this purpose they consulted Smeaton, the engineer, and obtained from him a report suggesting certain improvements. Application was made also at this time to Government that they should erect a barracks in the city, to the building of which the Council offered stones, lime, and a pipe of water, besides providing a site, but this generous offer on the part of the city authorities did not meet with much approval at headquarters, for it was nearly twenty years before any action was taken. In view of the large trade carried on at the port at the present time by trawling vessels, it is interesting to find that in 1771 the Town Council voted the sum of ten guineas as an encouragement to a fisherman from Hartlepool who was then attempting to establish in the burgh trawl fishing for flat fish.

1772-73.

112. JAMES JOPP of Cotton

(Council Reg., LXIII., 204; *LXIV.*, 1).

The improvements at the harbour had now taken definite shape, and a bill was promoted in Parliament to enable the works to be carried out. The bill, which received the Royal assent on 1st April, 1773, was the first of many Harbour Acts, and is intituled, "An Act for deepening, cleansing, and making more commodious the Harbour of Aberdeen; for erecting new Piers and Quays therein; and for regulating Ships and Vessels trading into, and going out of the said Harbour." Although these new

works involved the expenditure of large sums of money, it is evident that great care was exercised over the spending of it, if we judge from the fact that in 1772 the usual gratuity of a guinea to the trumpeter at the Circuit Court was withdrawn on the ground of being a gross misapplication of the town's funds. A new survey and plan of the town was prepared in 1773 by Messrs. Taylor & Skinner, for which the Council voted them a gratuity of twenty guineas.

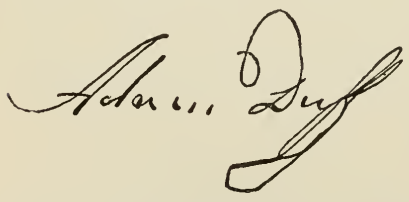
It was during his occupancy of the chair for this term that the Provost, on the 23rd August, 1773, had the privilege of presenting Dr. Samuel Johnson with the freedom of the city, and, according to Boswell, he performed the ceremony "with a very good grace." The lexicographer himself refers to the occasion in the following terms:—"On Monday we were invited into the Town Hall, where I had the freedom of the city given me by the Lord Provost. The honour conferred had all the decorations that politeness could add, and, what I am afraid I should not have had to say of any city south of the Tweed, I found no petty officer bowing for a fee."

1774-75.

CXIII. Adam Duff

(Council Reg., LXIV., 45, 65).

Provost Adam Duff was a grandson of Alexander Duff of Keithmore, and one of twenty-three children born to Patrick Duff of Craigston, who died in 1731, by his second spouse Mary Urquhart. He was admitted a member of the merchant guild on 1st August, 1744, and paid dues as an extranean. So far as ascertained, the Provost was unmarried at his death, which occurred in Aberdeen during the last week of November, 1795. The Provost's brother, Admiral Robert Duff,



was the great-grandfather of the late Sir Robert William Duff of Fetteresso.

The arms borne by the Duffs of Craigston were, vert, a fess dancetty ermine between a hart's head cabossed in chief and two escallops in base or.

In 1775 that portion of Queen Street lying between Broad Street and Lodge Walk was laid out by Provost Jopp, the Council contributing the sum of six hundred pounds to the scheme as the price of the property in Broad Street requiring to be removed. During the same year the heads of a proposed Police Bill were under consideration of the Council, but nothing definite was done.

The circulation of paper money by various private firms had apparently become a great source of annoyance and loss to the community, and a public meeting of the gentlemen of the city and county was held in 1775, at which Provost Shand was chairman, to consider the best means to be taken to warn the general public. An advertisement was, by order of the meeting, inserted in the newspapers to warn the public, with the result that Messrs. George Kellar & Co., of Glasgow, felt themselves aggrieved, and raised an action against Shand for destroying their credit. The Council, on consideration of the circumstances, resolved to bear the cost of defending the action, since the ex-provost had acted in good faith for the good of the whole community.

1776-77.

112. JAMES JOPP of Cotton

(Council Reg., LXIV., 88, 108).

The outbreak of the American War was the occasion for a great outburst of loyalty, which appears to have been received rather coldly in official quarters. In 1776 the Town Council offered a bounty of two guineas to seamen who volunteered for service, and two years later they made an offer to the Government to raise a body of men on certain conditions, one of which

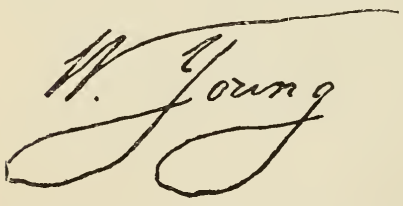
was that the regiment should be called the Aberdeen Volunteers, but the offer was declined. The Council thereafter formulated a scheme for enrolling and arming all the able-bodied citizens as a regiment for defence in case of the town being invaded. This project was, however, highly disapproved by General Oughten, then Commander-in-Chief for Scotland, and the Council had reluctantly to call in the arms which had already been distributed to a section of the burgesses. It is highly probable that Government did not think it quite a safe proceeding to arm the burgesses of a city like Aberdeen at such a time, when a diversion might have been made in the Highlands and have led to serious consequences.

1778-79.

CXIV. William Young of Sheddocksley

(Council Reg., LXIV., 145, 175).

Provost William Young was the eldest son of James Young, stocking manufacturer, by his second wife Rachel Cruickshank. He was born on the 25th September, 1736, and on the 26th September, 1738, while only two years of age, was admitted a guild brother, or, as it was termed in such cases, "an infant burgess." At the age of twenty-two he was admitted a partner in his father's business, in which he had received his commercial training, and the firm was known as James and William Young. The Provost was three times married, and left issue by the first two marriages. His first wife was Margaret Douglas, eldest daughter of John Douglas of Tilwhilly and Mary Arbuthnott, to whom he was married on the 17th September, 1767. She died in childbed on the 27th August, 1772, aged thirty-three years, having borne to the Provost two sons, besides two daughters who died in infancy—James, born the 5th August, 1771, and John, born



26th August, 1772, died 12th August, 1837, aged sixty-five years. Provost Young married for his second wife, on the 22nd July, 1781, Mary Anderson, only surviving daughter of Patrick Anderson of Bourtie, by his wife Elizabeth Ogilvie. The issue of this marriage was a son, Patrick, who died in 1787, a few days after his birth; Elizabeth, married on 7th January, 1807, to John Leith Ross of Arnage; Rachel, acquired Sheddocksley, married George Gordon of Buxburn, and died 16th May, 1873, in her ninetieth year; Jane, married Lieutenant-Colonel Patrick Black, of H.E.I. Company's Bengal Native Cavalry; Mary, who died unmarried on 6th February, 1863, aged seventy-five years; and Williamina, who married John Abercrombie, surgeon, and died in 1883. Mary Anderson died on the 14th January, 1794, aged forty-seven years. The Provost's third wife, whom he married on the 6th August, 1795, was Catherine Leslie, the eldest daughter of George Leslie, merchant in Aberdeen, by his wife Catherine Irvine. She survived her husband, having died on the 14th March, 1831, aged eighty-four years, while the Provost's death took place at his house in the Correction Wynd on the 28th November, 1814, at the age of seventy-eight years.

Provost Young, besides taking a keen interest in his own business, also took an active part in encouraging different branches of trade likely to prove beneficial to his native city. One of these concerns, viz., the Commercial Banking Company of Aberdeen, was established in the autumn of 1788, and during the forty-six years of its existence was one of the most prosperous of the Scotch banks. The average yearly profit from this business was not less than twenty-eight and a half per cent.

1780-81.

112. JAMES JOPP of Cotton

(Council Reg., LXIV., 207, 226).

During these years there was a foreshadowing of the desire for an improved access to the burgh from the south, and the

scheme proposed at this time was to join Castle Street and the Green by a new street running over the crest of S. Catherine's Hill, which it was proposed should be partly lowered so as not to make the levels too steep. Happily this proposal never got beyond a suggestion, for had effect been given to it at this time, the more liberal policy which devised Union Street and King Street would never have been carried out, for the difficulties in the way of a second improvement would have rendered such a scheme practically impossible.

1782-83.

114. WILLIAM YOUNG OF SHEDDOCKSLEY

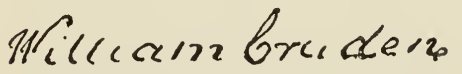
(Council Reg., LXV., 4, 34).

1784-85.

CXV. **William Cruden**

(Council Reg., LXV., 58, 99).

Provost Cruden was a son of William Cruden, junior, merchant in Aberdeen, and his wife Anna Phaans, a daughter of Convener William Phaans. The marriage took place on the 30th June, 1720, and among the cautioners for the bridegroom appears the name of Baillie William Cruden, who is supposed to have been closely related to the Provost's father, probably his uncle. This Baillie William Cruden was the father of Alexander Cruden, the author of the well-known book, "A Complete Concordance to the Holy Scriptures," first published in 1737. Provost Cruden was born in 1726, and married for his first wife Katherine Murdoch, who bore to him four sons and two daughters, all of whom died young. On the death of his first wife on the 13th August, 1758, aged forty years, he married in the following year for his second spouse Elizabeth Farquharson, a daughter of Thomas Farquharson, merchant in



Aberdeen, by whom he had two children—William, for some time a captain in the Tower Hamlets Regiment of Militia, and Elizabeth, who died unmarried, at Westburn, on 16th November, 1840, in her eightieth year. Mrs. Cruden died very suddenly on the 28th March, 1790, aged fifty-nine years. She attended the morning service in church as usual, but took ill in her pew, from whence she was carried home, and died the same evening. The Provost was in Edinburgh, but was able to be back in time for the funeral, which, an eye-witness tells us, was conducted with great pomp, "bells tolling and minute guns firing at the Castle-hill, for," says the same person, "she died unusually regrated."* Provost Cruden died on the 23rd December, 1807, aged eighty-one years. A younger brother of the Provost's was the Reverend David Cruden, D.D., who was minister of Nigg for the long period of fifty-seven years.

The subject of burgh reform came prominently before the Council during the above two years. A committee of burgesses was formed, and they applied to the Council for certain privileges, among others that a statement of the public monies received and expended should be given, and the right of inspection of the public records. The incidence of the taxations was likewise a question which attracted the attention of the committee, and they addressed a memorial to the Board of Taxers on this subject, which the Town Council characterised as a "contrivance to create and stir up groundless jealousy, division, and discontent among the citizens," and in consequence they did nothing.

1786.

112. JAMES JOPP of Cotton

(Council Reg., LXV., 150).

At the Michaelmas election of this year Jopp, in his absence, was chosen provost for another term of two years, but he refused

* Descendants of James Young and Rachel Cruickshank, 1894, 241.

to act. The reason stated by him was that his health was far from good, and that consequently the right performance of the duties of the office could not be carried out by him. There are indications, besides, that he had differences with the majority of the Council regarding abuses in connection with many of the town's public works, as also on the question of the expenditure incurred by the Council in various ways. Provost Jopp having adhered to his resolution not to act, the Council nominated the senior baillie, John Abercrombie, to act in his place till an election should be made, which was not till the next Michaelmas meeting in 1787.

1787-88.

CXVI. **John Abercrombie, Junior**

(Council Reg., LXV., 194; *LXVI.*, 15).

Provost John Abercrombie was the third son of the Rev. Robert Abercrombie, minister of the parish of Leslie (1720-51) by his wife Margaret, a daughter of the Rev. Alexander Toasch, at one time minister of Tarland. It is understood that the Provost's family was descended from the house of Birkenbog, known during the sixteenth century as of Pitmedden. There was a large family at the manse of Leslie, viz., six sons and five daughters, and while some of the sons entered the ministry, John came to Aberdeen and started in business as a stocking manufacturer. The Provost was born in 1729, and on 25th January, 1771, he married Catherine Forbes, the eldest daughter of William Forbes, coppersmith in Aberdeen, by his wife Janet Dyce. There were born of this marriage four sons and two daughters:—Robert, merchant in Aberdeen, died unmarried, 9th April, 1843; William, for several years in the East India Company's navy, and afterwards a merchant in London, married and

had issue; John, at one time surgeon, 2nd Dragoon Guards, born March, 1778, married, 29th April, 1816, Williamina Young, fifth daughter of Provost William Young (114), and died 3rd April, 1860; Alexander, merchant in Aberdeen, died unmarried in 1866; Janet, married on 19th November, 1792, to Alexander Dingwall, afterwards of Rannieston, merchant and postmaster of Aberdeen, and died in March, 1852; and Margaret, married to Andrew Jopp, advocate in Aberdeen. Mrs. Abercrombie died in September, 1785, and the Provost in June, 1820, aged ninety-one years. A portrait of the Provost is in the possession of Mrs. Dingwall, West Kensington, the widow of Arthur Dingwall, a grandson of the Provost.

In 1789, on the completion of the North Pier, after the design by Smeaton, a jetty was constructed near the west end of the pier to break the swell within the harbour, and the new work was called after the Provost, and is still known as "Abercrombie's Jetty."

1789-90.

115. WILLIAM CRUDEN

(Council Reg., LXVI., 54, 118).

In 1790 the gentlemen of the Northern Shooting Club started horse-racing on the Links, and they applied to the Council for a piece of plate for competition at these races, but the request was refused. Their sentiments had changed, however, within the subsequent three years, for on the occasion of a second application being made the Council voted a purse of thirty pounds, and a similar sum was granted for several years.

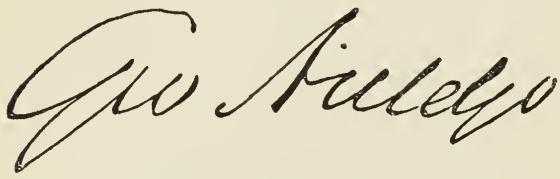
1791-92.

CXVII. George Auldjo of Portlethen

(Council Reg., LXVI., 162, 217).

Provost Auldjo was a son of John Auldjo of Portlethen, who died on the 16th August, 1786. The Provost was born in 1756,

admitted a burgess in 1771, and on the 7th April, 1782, was married, at London, to Susan Beauvais, of Jermyn Street, S. James. Of this marriage there were several children born, of whom John, the eldest son, was admitted an infant burgess on



27th September, 1785, and was the author of "A Narrative of an Ascent to the Summit of Mont Blanc in 1827," "Sketches of Vesuvius," 1833, and "Journal of a Visit to Constantinople," 1835; Lewis, the second son, admitted as an infant burgess, 25th September, 1787; Thomas, the fourth son, a lieutenant in the army, died at Ludsnow on the 3rd September, 1808; and a daughter, Margaret, married Alexander Skene, of the Belhelvie family. Provost Auldjo died at his house at Clayhills on the 24th December, 1806, in the fiftieth year of his age. The Provost held the office of Distributer of Stamps, having succeeded Provost Duncan on payment to him of the yearly sum of £180. The arms said to be borne by the family were—argent, three hearts conjoined in triangle by the points gules; in base a buck's head cabossed of the second, all within a lordine azure; crest, a stump of an oak tree shooting forth new branches, vert; motto, "Non deficit alter."*

The proposal for the erection of a military barracks within the city was again brought under the notice of the Government by the Council, with the result that action was at once taken in the matter, and the present barracks on the Castlehill were built, the town giving the site on condition that a barracks should be maintained on the ground by the Government, the agreement further providing that the ground should revert to the town in case of the barracks being removed to any other site. The Upperkirkgate port, the last of the ancient gateways of the burgh was removed in 1793.

* Baronage of Angus and Mearns, 6.

1793-94.

116. JOHN ABERCROMBIE, Junior

(Council Reg., LXVI., 253; *LXVII,* 36).

The agitation for burgh reform had been carried on most persistently during the previous few years, and success seemed just about to crown the efforts of the reformers when the French Revolution threw the Government of this country into a temporary panic, and put a stop to further progress at this time. What the American War could not do, the disturbances in France accomplished, and, on the recommendation of Government, a corps of four hundred volunteers was enrolled. The Provost was colonel commandant, and the dress of the regiment was "a blue coat, white facings, white vest and breeches, with black gaiters, round hat and feather." During Abercrombie's term of office at this time, two new Acts of Parliament were obtained. The first of these was an Act continuing the powers obtained in the first Harbour Act of 1773, while the second was that constituting the Police Commission. The latter Act, which received Royal assent on the 19th May, 1795, is entitled "An Act for the better paving, lighting, cleansing, and otherwise improving the Streets, Lanes, and other Publick Passages of the City of Aberdeen, and the Roads and Avenues within the Royalty thereof; for the better supplying the Inhabitants with fresh Water, and for the removing and preventing all Obstructions and Annoyances within the said City and Royalty." The Police Board, which came into existence for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act, relieved the Town Council of many of the duties formerly discharged by that body. The Police Commissioners from the first published an account of their revenue and expenditure, and were in every respect a democratic body, and for a time at least, by their actions, must have weakened the cry for burgh reform, the discussions on which had been carried on with no little heat by a large section of the burgesses. During 1795 the four Magistrates, the Dean of

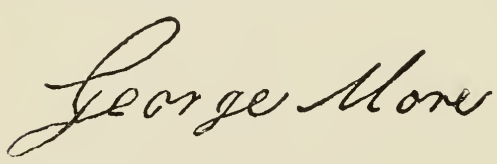
Guild, and the City Treasurer received chains of office, which had been purchased in London, at a cost of nearly a hundred and seventy pounds, and they were instructed by the Council to wear the chains as a badge of distinction on every public occasion.

1795-96.

CXVIII. George More of Raeden

(Council Reg., LXVII., 83, 124).

Provost More was the eldest of the family borne to Gilbert More by his wife, Helen Shepherd, a daughter of George Shepherd, merchant burgess of Aberdeen, who died 9th January, 1794. The Provost's father, who died on the 27th November, 1796, purchased Raeden, and built the present house there, having, like his son, carried on business in the city as a merchant. Provost More was admitted a burgess of Guild on 5th September, 1753, and was twice married, his first wife being Jane Innes, eldest daughter of Alexander Innes of Breda and Cowie, Commissary Clerk of Aberdeen, to whom he was married on the 9th June, 1787. On her death, which occurred 24th February, 1794,* he married, on the 21st March, 1795, for his second wife, Harriet Beauvais, youngest daughter of Lewis Beauvais, wine merchant, Jermyn Street, London, a sister, evidently, of the wife of Provost George Auldjo (117). By his two marriages Provost More had fourteen children, of whom Gilbert entered the H.E.I. Company's Civil Service, and died unmarried, at Singapore, on the 25th August, 1830; George, a major in the same service, married Jane Mitchell, daughter of James Mowat, manufacturer in Aberdeen, had issue, and died at



* The notice of Mrs. More's death in the *Aberdeen Journal* concludes with a poetical tribute to her many graces.

THOMAS LEYS

OF GLASGOFOREST.

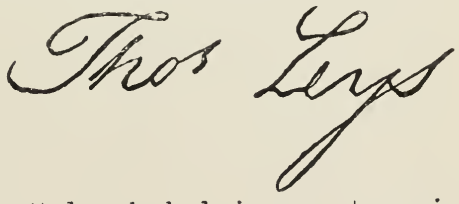
Asserrghar on 10th November, 1843; Alexander, died 29th April, 1875, aged seventy-three years; Lewis, the third son; and Mary D , who died at Aberdeen in 1889, aged seventy-nine years. The firm of Gilbert More & Sons in 1795 consisted of the Provost and his two sons above referred to, Gilbert and Alexander. Harriet Beauvais or More died at Aberdeen on the 8th July, 1855, aged eighty-two years. The curious will find, in the April number for 1863 of "Fraser's Magazine," an amusing story of a visit Provost More paid on one occasion to London. The chief event during the two years of More's provostship was the passing of a Parliamentary Act authorising the constructing and maintaining of a navigable canal from the harbour of Aberdeen to the river Don "at or near the south end of the bridge over the same adjacent to the Royal Burgh of Inverurie." The Aberdeenshire Canal Navigation Company did good service to the city and county for over half a century, when the locomotive took the place of the former slow but enjoyable mode of transit.

1797-98.

CXIX. Thomas Leys of Glasgoforest

(Council Reg., LXVII., 156, 187).

Provost Leys was a son of Baillie Francis Leys, who died in November, 1788, by his wife Elizabeth Ingram, a daughter of William Ingram, merchant in Huntly. The Provost's parents were married in 1755, and, besides himself, there was a daughter, who became the wife of Provost Alexander Brebner (122) in 1783. Provost Leys was unmarried, and died on the 24th October, 1809, at the early age of forty-five years, much regretted, as he had given great promise of public usefulness. In 1749, the Provost's father, as a member of the firm of Leys, Still, & Co., afterwards known as Leys


  Thos Leys

Masson, & Co., started a manufactory for linen thread and cloth at Gordon's Mills, now known as Grandholm Works. In this business the Provost was actively engaged along with his brother-in-law, Provost Alexander Brebner, and Provost James Hadden, as partners. On his father's death in 1788, the Provost succeeded to his interest in the works, and also to the estate of Glasgoforest, in the parish of Kinellar. He was, at the time of his death, Convener of the County of Aberdeen.

It was in great measure to the foresight and ability of Provost Leys that the scheme for two new leading thoroughfares into the city was devised in the liberal spirit in which it was ultimately carried out. On the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of Union Bridge, on 7th July, 1801, Provost Dingwall, in reply to a remark by Alexander Allardyce, M.P., said, "before concluding, I cannot omit this opportunity of joining you (as, I am sure, all present will) in the just eulogium you have bestowed upon the exertions of my worthy predecessor, Mr. Leys, who has, by his perseverance and zeal, contributed so essentially to bring this work to its present advanced state."

Through the kindness of Colonel Innes of Learney, a portrait of Provost Leys is given from a fine painting at Learney House.

1799-1800.

CXX. John Dingwall of Ardo and Rannieston

(Council Reg., LXVII., 223; *LXVIII*, 14).

This provost was the fourth son of Baillie John Dingwall, stocking manufacturer, by his first wife, Mary Lumsden, a daughter of the Rev. James Lumsden, minister of Towie. Provost Dingwall was born 22nd September, 1761, and on the death of his brother Arthur, without issue, he succeeded to the estate of Rannieston, in the parish of Logie-Buchan. The Provost was three times married, his first wife being a daughter of Baillie George Willox, of Old Aberdeen, and the widow of a Captain Pringle. His second wife, Catherine Jane

Moir, to whom he was married on the 20th March, 1800, was a daughter of Rev. William Moir, minister of Fyvie. On her death, he married for his third wife, Ann Taylor, who survived him. By neither of these marriages had he any children, and at his death, which occurred on the 29th March, 1836, his estates of Rannieston and Ardo passed to his younger brother, Alexander, who was for long post-master of Aberdeen, and died in May, 1840.* Provost Dingwall had the satisfaction while in office to see the "Act for Opening and Making Two New Streets in the City of Aberdeen" safely passed through Parliament, and, as already noticed, he laid the foundation-stone of Union Bridge, on 7th July, 1801, in the double capacity of Lord Provost and Master of the Ancient Lodge of Aberdeen Freemasons.

The Provost's father may be said to have introduced the manufacture of stockings as a trade to Aberdeen, and at his death on the 13th May, 1793, in his seventy-seventh year, the following notice regarding him appeared in the *Aberdeen Journal*:— "He carried on business in this place for upwards of fifty years. Early in life, he established the manufacture of knit stockings on the same plan as in England; and by carrying the business to an extent and perfection never known before his time, he rendered the most essential service to this town and county by extending and improving its staple commodity. He was a gentleman of the strictest integrity and punctuality in business, of a clear understanding, and a sincere friend." To the business thus established, Provost Dingwall succeeded, and although having to contend with considerable competition, he worthily upheld the traditions of the house.

* Family Records of Dingwall-Fordyce.

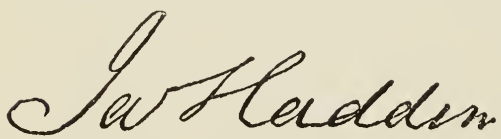
In 1792, the year prior to Baillie Dingwall's death, he recorded arms as follows:—Azure, a golden fleece suspended from the top of the shield between three spur-revels of six points or, within a bordure of the last. A footnote in the Lyon Register regarding these arms says, "And which golden fleece is assigned to him as a mark of distinction on account of the very essential services done by him to the stocking trade of the Town and County of Aberdeen."*

1801-2.

CXXI. James Hadden of Persley

(Council Reg., LXVIII., 59, 93).

Provost James Hadden was the eldest son of a large family borne to Baillie Alexander Hadden by his wife, Elspet Young, a sister of Provost William Young (114). Born on the 27th May, 1758, he was admitted in September, 1760, an infant burgess of the city. He received his education at the Grammar School and Marischal College, and while still quite young he became a partner in two of the leading manufacturing firms in the city—viz., Leys, Masson, & Co. and Alexander Hadden and Sons. Nor did these concerns wholly occupy his attention, for he was an active supporter and took a fair share in the work of formation of the Commercial Banking Company, the Aberdeenshire Canal Company, and the Aberdeen Life Assurance Company.



Provost Hadden married on 20th April, 1789, Violette Elizabeth, the second daughter of Alexander Innes of Breda and Cowie, Commissary of Aberdeen, by whom he had issue—besides some children who died in infancy—Alexander, born 13th February, 1790, manufacturer, and for several years (1837-48), a

* Ordinary of Scottish Arms, 109.

JAMES HADDEN

OF PERSLEY

member of the Town Council and Harbour Board, died unmarried, 4th December, 1866; James, born 5th October, 1791, manufacturer, and Dean of Guild (1845-46), married Elizabeth, eldest daughter of George Hogarth of Woodhill, and died 9th March, 1850; Thomas Leys, born 14th May, 1805, manufacturer, and at one time a member of the Town Council, afterwards a merchant in Glasgow, and died at Moffat, 12th September, 1865; John Innes, born 27th September, 1811, manufacturer, died unmarried, 19th July, 1845; Eliza, born 31st May, 1793, married Colin Campbell M'Intyre, and died 21st February, 1872; Elspet, born 18th February, 1795, married Colonel Martin Lindsay of Halbeath, in Fife, and died 18th October, 1862; and Helen, born 19th April, 1796, married William Forbes-Robertson of Hazelhead, and died 20th October, 1873. Mrs. Hadden died on the 6th November, 1834, aged sixty-five years, and the Provost's death occurred on the 8th June, 1845, at the age of eighty-seven years. The two years of Hadden's provostship were very busy ones for the Council, as the improvements in connection with the purchase of properties for the laying out of Union Street and King Street were then carried out. So vigorously were the works carried on that the keystone of Union Bridge, built at a cost of over £13,000, was driven on the 25th August, 1803. The public works in which Hadden was afterwards engaged will be referred to at the proper place; but it may be mentioned here that he was named "the father of the city" in recognition of his labours for the opening up and beautifying of the town. As a further mark of the esteem in which he was held, his portrait, by Pickersgill, was subscribed for by public subscription, and placed in the Town-Hall, where it now hangs. An engraving of this portrait was published by 1853 by the late Mr. John Hay, from which the reproduction here given has been taken.

Provost Hadden, after the passing of the Reform Act of 1832, stood as a candidate for his native city in the Conservative interest against Mr. Bannerman, but, on the advice of friends, he withdrew before the day of election. The fact was that the

Provost at this time was very unpopular, and on coming forward as a candidate for the Third Ward in 1833, he failed to get elected to the Town Council.

It was only after the "Reform" Council had investigated the affairs of the town, and it came to be realised that the actings of former councils had not "been gross jobbing and corruption," that Provost Hadden came to hold the general esteem of the whole community, which, it may safely be said, he did for the last fourteen years of his life.

1803-4.

119. THOMAS LEYS OF GLASGOFOREST

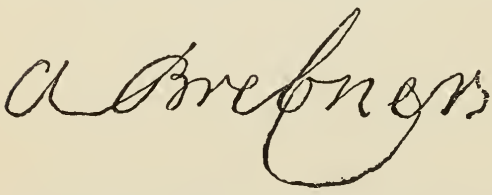
(Council Reg., LXVIII., 140, 157).

1805-6.

CXXII. Alexander Brebner of Learney

(Council Reg., LXVIII., 209, 250).

Provost Brebner was the son of William Brebner of Learney, and was admitted a burgess of Guild on 29th July, 1779. He carried on business in the city as a merchant and manufacturer, and was for long a member of the firm of Leys, Masson, & Co. He married on 17th August, 1783, Christian Leys, a daughter of Baillie Francis Leys, and a sister of Provost Thomas Leys (119), by whom he had issue—Jane, the eldest daughter, married on 19th October, 1809, William Innes of Hall-green, merchant in London; William, admitted as an infant burgess on 27th September, 1796; and a daughter who, on her father's death, was co-heiress with Mrs. Innes. Provost Brebner died on 28th February, 1823, aged seventy years, and Mrs. Brebner on 16th February, 1843, aged



eighty years. The arms of Brebner of Learney, as recognised in the arms granted in 1875 to Colonel Innes of Learney, a grandson of the Provost, were or, a fess ermine, between three griffins' heads erased vert.

1807-8.

118. GEORGE MORE of Raeden

(*Council Reg.*, *LXIX.*, 37, 76).

The great subject before the Council during this period was the improvement of the harbour; the obstruction caused by the bar and the want of proper dock accommodation being felt as very great drawbacks to the advancement of the port as a centre for shipping. Plans were consequently prepared showing wet docks, a tide lock, and an extended North Pier, and these were approved of by Telford; but there was a large section of the burgesses who looked upon the scheme as far and away beyond the requirements of the port. A bill was introduced into Parliament asking the necessary powers, and it was opposed by those who disapproved of the scheme, but the Council were able to carry the bill, and on the 18th May, 1810, it obtained the Royal assent. It was under this Act that the Harbour Commission was established, and the affairs of the harbour came to be managed by a separate board, the town retaining a reversionary interest in the Trust.

1809-10.

121. JAMES HADDEN of Persley

(*Council Reg.*, *LXIX.*, 117, 173).

The powers obtained under the Harbour Act of 1810 were at once put into operation, and several works were carried out at a cost of about £120,000, although none of the larger works contemplated in the Act, such as the tide lock, wet docks, or graving dock, were executed, or even attempted; for it was soon

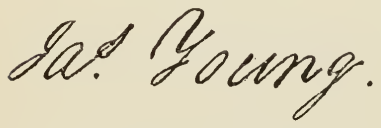
found that the debt already incurred was more than the revenue from the Trust warranted. For the year 1810-1811 the revenue derived from the Harbour amounted to £7,214, the expenditure for the same period, £24,323, and the debt at the close of the year, £60,192.

1811-12.

CXXIII. **James Young, Junior**

(Council Reg., LXIX., 206, 235).

Provost Young was the eldest son of James Young, merchant, and Dean of Guild, by his wife, Elizabeth Black, and was born on the 30th April, 1776. He was in partnership with his uncle, Provost William Young (114), in the stocking trade, but the industry, at the commencement of the French Revolution, received a severe check, and having afterwards fallen off considerably, the Provost left this country for Holland at the Peace of 1814. Settling at Rotterdam, he carried on business as a general merchant, with, it is understood, considerable success till his death in 1834. Provost Young married on the 27th November, 1806, Patience D. Fordyce, eighth daughter of Dr. Arthur D. Fordyce of Culsh, by his wife Janet Morison, a daughter of Provost James Morison of Elsick (106). The issue of this marriage was eight sons and eight daughters:—James, born 20th September, 1808, died in childhood; Arthur, born 9th January, 1810, merchant in Antwerp for some time, now living at Worthing, author of several works, among the last being "Sociology Diagrammatically Systematised," London, 1890; William, born 9th June, 1815, merchant in Bombay, Antwerp, and Rotterdam, died unmarried, 4th February, 1883, author of "Nova Zembla," a poem published in 1874; George Gordon, born 31st March, 1816, died when a few days old; James Hadden, twin brother of George, inventor of a type



composing machine in use in 1842, died unmarried, 20th July, 1861; Thomas Morison, born 13th October, 1819, died 1824; George, born 22nd December, 1822, died unmarried, 29th April, 1869; Gavin David, born 5th January, 1825, director of several mining and other companies in Australia, married Frances Richman, and died 26th February, 1881; Jessy, born 7th October, 1807, married James Macpherson, and perished at sea, 12th October, 1839; Elizabeth, born 1st January, 1811, married Arthur Harvey, now living at Adelaide, Australia; Catherine Leslie, died in infancy; Jane, accidentally drowned at the Cove in June, 1828; Isabella, died in infancy; Patience Mary, died in 1834; Angelica and Mary Ann, both died in infancy. Mrs. Young died at Rotterdam on the 21st March, 1827, aged forty years, and the Provost died in the same place on the 17th May, 1834, aged fifty-eight years.

The loss of the "Oscar" in April, 1813, so impressed itself on the minds of the people that the calamity is still sometimes referred to as an event by which the approximate date of others is fixed.

1813-14.

121. JAMES HADDEN OF PERSLEY

(Council Reg., LXX., 9, 39).

In 1814 an Act was obtained for erecting and maintaining a new Court-House and other offices for the city and county of Aberdeen, and also for providing and maintaining an additional gaol. It was under this Act and another obtained in 1819 that the West Prison, or Bridewell, was erected.

1815-16.

CXXIV. **Alexander Fraser**

(Council Reg., LXX., 60, 77).

Provost Fraser was a native of Inverness, and was born there on the 21st November, 1775. His parents were William Fraser,

who was factor on part of the Lovat estates, while his mother was Jean Steuart, a daughter of Alexander Steuart, merchant in Inverness, by his wife, Jean Scott. The Provost, who is described as being "warm-hearted, genial in disposition, and possessed of a great fund of humour," carried on business in the city as a merchant, corn-factor, and shipowner. He was married on the 31st May, 1798, to Agnes Dingwall Fordyce, the sixth daughter of Dr. Arthur D. Fordyce of Culsh, by whom he had issue, five sons and seven daughters:—William, born 1801, died 1805; John Mathieson, born 21st November, 1805, merchant in Antwerp, latterly resided in London, married Emilie, only daughter of Baron Nottebohm, and died 13th January, 1885; William, born 1809, died 17th January, 1823; Arthur, born 22nd July, 1811, merchant in Java, latterly residing in Edinburgh, married Margaret Jane, daughter of Duncan Davidson of Inchmarlo, and died 3rd May, 1881; Alexander, merchant in Java, and now residing in London; Janet, born 14th February, 1799, married, in 1825, Alexander Thomson of Banchory, and died 8th August, 1870; Jean Steuart, born 22nd January, 1840, married John R. Turing, merchant in Rotterdam, and died 21st August, 1870; Agnes Dyce, born 22nd March, 1807, died unmarried, 24th May, 1873; Isabella, born 1808, died 1815; Margaret Herries Helen, born 1813, died unmarried, 29th September, 1831; Barbara, married, in 1841, Charles Frederick Gibson, then Lieutenant 70th Foot; and Angelica Patience. Mrs. Fraser died in Aberdeen on 6th March, 1834, and the Provost died on the 21st May, 1840, aged sixty-five years.

The outlay for the formation of Union Street and King Street had up to this time been very great, while the returns were far from meeting the heavy expenditure incurred; indeed, for some years prior to 1817, the Treasurer had been unable to

meet the full interest of five per cent. on the borrowed money. In February of 1817 the claims of the Treasurer had become so pressing that it was deemed expedient to suspend payment, and at a meeting on the 8th of that month Provost Fraser submitted a statement of the position of matters, and after several meetings between the Council and the burgesses, the former conveyed all the property of the burgh in favour of twenty-one trustees for behoof of the creditors of the town. Various proposals were submitted by the Magistrates and Council with the view of finding a *modus vivendi* out of the difficulty, but feeling ran too high against the Council, especially regarding the mode of election of that body, for any agreement to be come to by parties.

1817.

CXXV. Charles Forbes of Auchmedden

(Council Reg., LXX., 153).

At the Michaelmas election of this year, owing, doubtless, to "the singular and unprecedented circumstances in which the corporation was placed," fifteen persons entitled to vote for the new office-bearers absented themselves, while, of the nineteen persons elected as the Council for the ensuing year, thirteen positively refused to act. The election of Forbes as provost, although he refused office, was contrary to precedent, as he was not a burgess, a "trafficker," nor an actual indweller within the burgh. A petition to the Court of Session was presented by John Elphinstone and others against the validity of the election as a whole, in respect that the terms of the trust deed virtually disfranchised the burgh, that the refusal of a majority of the Council to accept office rendered acceptance by the minority impossible, the fact that Forbes was not eligible to be elected provost, and that irregularities had been committed in carrying out the election. The six Councillors who had accepted office entered defences, in which they pleaded that the trust deed did not annul their

jurisdiction, the refusal of office by others did not necessarily affect their position in accepting, and as regards the election of Forbes to the provostship they endeavoured to establish that a precedent had been created in the case of Provost Shand (111), who was only an honorary burgess, and thus exactly in the same position as Forbes. The further plea of irregularity in carrying out the election referred to the fact that in filling up the vacancies caused by the abstention of fifteen persons at the meeting for the election of office-bearers, a William Rae, who was not a burgess, was included and exercised his vote. The decision, dated 10th March, 1818, avoided dealing with the first three questions, and was to the effect that "The Lords having advised this Petition and Complaint, with Answers thereto, Replies and Duplies, in respect that William Rae, not being a burgess of Aberdeen, was ineligible to vote in the election instead of one of the Guild Brethren, absent from the same, and that thereby there was a deficit in the number of forty votes required to be present thereat: Find, that the whole proceedings of the said meetings on the 24th September last were illegal, and that the election pretended to have been made of counsellors, magistrates, and office-bearers of the city of Aberdeen was illegal, void, and null, to all intents and purposes; and reduce and set aside the same accordingly and decern." A second petition praying for the interposition of the Court in regard to the management of the affairs of the burgh resulted in the Court nominating interim Magistrates and office-bearers to act till the magistracy, &c., should be restored.

Charles Forbes, who was nominated and appointed provost in such circumstances, was the son of the Reverend George Forbes of Leochel, and a grandson of John Forbes of Bellabeg. He was for long a merchant in Bombay, but, returning home, entered Parliament as member for Beverley, Yorkshire, 1812-18, and Malmesbury, 1818-32. When admitted an honorary burgess on 3rd November, 1813, he was described as of Edinglassie, and in the law process of 1818, as of Auchmedden. Forbes was created

a baronet on 4th November, 1823, and became the great-grandfather of the present baronet of Castle Newe. Forbes died, 20th November, 1849, having married Elizabeth Ashburner, by whom he had three sons and a daughter.

1818-19.

122. ALEXANDER BREBNER OF LEARNEY

(Council Reg., LXX., 173, 212).

In accordance with the decision of the Privy Council, the Magistrates and Councillors who had retired at Michaelmas, 1817, met on the 23rd September, 1818, and elected a new Council, and both old and new Councils thereafter elected office-bearers according to ancient custom.

1820-21.

CXXVI. Gavin Hadden of Union Grove

(Council Reg., LXX., 231; *LXXI.*, 1).

Provost Gavin Hadden was a brother of Provost James Hadden (121), being the fourth surviving son of Baillie Alexander Hadden and his wife Elspet Young. He was born on the 8th May, 1770, and married on the 4th July, 1799, Hope Innes, seventh daughter of Alexander Innes of Breda and Cowie, by whom he had issue three sons and six daughters:—Gavin, born 18th September, 1801, manufacturer and member of the firm of Alexander Hadden & Sons, married Janet Dyce, daughter of Robert Forbes of Castleton, and died, 14th June, 1841; William Innes, born 24th October, 1807, merchant at Riga, died unmarried, 27th June, 1840; James (Farquhar), born 25th April, 1809, manufacturer, died, 10th

December, 1879, having married, in 1842, Elizabeth Violette, daughter of Colonel Lindsay, C.B.; Jane, born 1800, died unmarried, 3rd December, 1869; Hope, born 1803, died unmarried, 14th May, 1828; Margaret, born 1804, married Thomas Tod, barrister-at-law, and died 8th October, 1888; Hannah Eliza, born 1813, died unmarried, 15th November, 1868; Mary Ramsay, born 1816, died unmarried, 11th November, 1832; and Robina Duff, born 1820, married Thomas N. Farquhar, solicitor, and died 15th April, 1886.

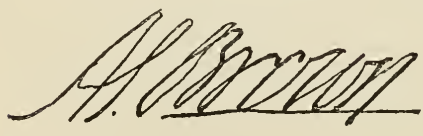
Provost Hadden died at Union Grove on the 12th June, 1857, in his eighty-eighth year, and his wife died on the 14th September of the following year, aged seventy-eight years. Both are interred in S. Nicholas Churchyard. The Provost, like his brother, was a manufacturer, being a member of the firm of Alexander Hadden & Sons.

1822-23.

CXXVII. Alexander Brown

(*Council Reg.*, *LXXI.*, 18, 36).

Provost Brown was the third son of the Rev. William Brown, the first Secession minister of Craigdam, and was born there in May, 1766. The Provost's eldest brother, John, studied medicine in Aberdeen, while another brother, William, became a bookseller in Dundee, and by his verse claims a place among our local bards. Provost Brown, at the age of sixteen years, came into the city, and was apprenticed to the bookselling trade with Mr. Knight, father of Professor Knight, and some three years later he commenced business on his own account in the Upperkirkgate. The firm of Alexander Brown & Son is thus one of the firms in the city that can claim a connection with a past century. Provost Brown was admitted a burgess of Guild on the 15th September,



1787. On the 17th February, 1795, the Provost married Catherine Chalmers, eldest daughter of James Chalmers, printer, and the issue of this marriage was five sons and three daughters: —William, born 17th February, 1796, succeeded his father as Distributer of Stamps, died, January, 1861; James, born 19th February, 1798, merchant in London, died February, 1835; Alexander, born 15th January, 1802; David, born 17th August, 1803, Principal of the Free Church College, Aberdeen, and Moderator of the General Assembly in 1885; Charles John, born 21st August, 1806, for some time minister of the Free New North Church, Edinburgh, and died 3rd July, 1884; Margaret, born 26th June, 1799, died, 4th February, 1862; Catherine, born 19th July, 1811, married on 15th November, 1831, to Joseph Thorburn, minister at Forglen; and Isabella, born 9th June, 1813, married the Rev. John Murray, of the North Parish Church, Aberdeen.

The Provost, prior to filling the civic chair, was a magistrate in 1812, and again in 1820, while in 1818 he was chosen Dean of Guild. Provost Brown died on the 16th November, 1848, aged eighty-two years. A portrait of the Provost, from a miniature by A. Robertson, appears in George Walker's "Aberdeen Awa'," page 92.

In 1824 the first endeavour to introduce gas into the burgh was made, but the success attending the undertaking was for long far from encouraging.

1824-25.

126. GAVIN HADDEN of Union Grove

(Council Reg., LXXI., 76, 117).

The progress of feuing the ground along the two new streets had so far exceeded the expectations regarding it that in 1825 the trustees who had been appointed in 1817 were able to hand back to the Magistrates and Council the whole property which had been conveyed to them in trust. The population of the city

during the first quarter of this century about doubled itself, for in 1801 it was 13,560, and in 1825 the population was reckoned at 26,370.

To obtain the full advantage of the new north access to the city it was determined to build a bridge over the Don more in line with the new street and of a more commodious character than the old Bridge of Balgownie, and so on the 20th May, 1825, an Act was obtained for "building a bridge over the river Don near the village of Balgownie, or Polgownie, in the parish of Old Machar." The bridge erected under the powers of this Act was opened for traffic in 1830, having cost the Bridge of Don Fund close on £26,000.

1826-27.

127. ALEXANDER BROWN

(Council Reg., LXXI., 175, 219).

1828-29.

126. GAVIN HADDEN of Union Grove

(Council Reg., LXXII., 10, 44).

Two important parliamentary measures affecting the city were passed during 1829; the first of these, dealing with the improvement of the harbour, was rendered absolutely necessary from the increased trade done at the port, while the second measure had become imperative in the interests of the health of the citizens generally. This second Act was one "for the better paving, cleansing, lighting, watching, and improving the streets and lanes and other public places and passages within the city and certain grounds adjacent, for regulating the police thereof, and for supplying the inhabitants with water." The supply of water obtained from certain spring wells and from the Gilcomston waterworks had become entirely inadequate to meet the requirements of the extended burgh, especially during the

dry summers which preceded 1829. The works carried out under the Act provided a supply taken from the Dee a little above the old bridge, from which point, after filtration, it was pumped into the water-house or reservoir erected in Union Place. The amount capable of being supplied by this scheme was a thousand gallons per minute.

In 1828 the spiritual necessities of the citizens were provided for by the division, under decreet of the Court of Session, of the old parish of S. Nicholas into six parishes, and it was in carrying out this decreet that the present North Parish Church was built in 1831, and the South Parish Church in 1830.

1830-31.

121. JAMES HADDEN of Persley

(Council Reg., LXXII., 90, 131).

The great subject before the public at this time, eclipsing all others in its importance, was the question of parliamentary and burgh reform, which, after more than half a century of agitation, was now almost an accomplished fact, and that notwithstanding opposition of no ordinary kind. The first of these boons was granted in July, 1832, when an Act to Amend the Representation of the People in Scotland was placed on the statute-book. By this Act the city became entitled to return a member to Parliament in place of having one vote in the election of a member for a group of burghs, as had been the case since the Union.

1832.

126. GAVIN HADDEN of Union Grove

(Council Reg., LXXII., 177).

At the Michaelmas election in 1832, James Hadden retired for the purpose of becoming a candidate for the city in Parliament in opposition to Alexander Bannerman, but seeing that the

principles professed by him were highly unpopular, he withdrew before the poll. The election took place at the "hustings" erected in Castle Street on the 18th December, 1832, when Alexander Bannerman was, without opposition, declared elected. The sequel to the reform in Parliamentary representation was an abolition of the system whereby the retiring Council in burghs elected their successors, and this was accomplished by the Burgh Reform Act of 1833 (3 and 4 William IV., c. 76), which abolished in the Royal burghs of Scotland a system that was almost coeval with their erection.

1833-35.

CXXVIII. James Blaikie of Craigiebuckler

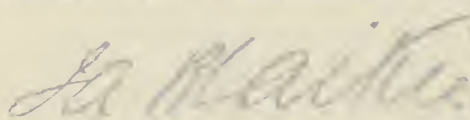
(Council Reg., LXXII., 229).

James Blaikie was a son of John Blaikie, plumber and coppersmith in Aberdeen, by his wife, Helen Richardson. The family belonged originally to the Borders, but certain of them having been engaged in the '15, they came north to Perthshire, under the protection of the Duke of Perth, and settled on a farm near Dunkeld. The Provost's father, John Blaikie, came from Perth to Aberdeen about 1780, and founded the business of John Blaikie & Sons. James Blaikie was born in 1786, studied law, and was admitted a member of the Society of Advocates in Aberdeen in 1808. He married Jane Garden, a daughter of William Garden, Braco Park, by his wife, Eliza Logie, and had issue, John, advocate in Aberdeen, and afterwards of Craigiebuckler; William Garden, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Apologetics and Pastoral Theology in New College, Edinburgh, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church in 1895; Anthony Adrian, advocate in Aberdeen, married, 6th July, 1852, his cousin, Helen Blaikie, and died in Natal, South Africa, 18th November, 1871; and Elizabeth,

CXXVIII James Blaikie of Craigiebuckler

(Senat. Acc. LXXII. 29)

James Blaikie was a son of John Blaikie plumber and coppersmith in Aberdeen and his wife Helen Robertson. The



and was admitted a member of the Society of Advocates in Aberdeen in 1804. He married from Perth, a daughter of William Gordon, Writer [illegible] Perth, and settled in Aberdeen. William Gordon, LL.D., Professor of Apologetics and Pastoral Theology in the Free Church College, Edinburgh, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church in 1900, and [illegible] married, 6th Jan. 1846, Jane Ann Blaikie, and [illegible] Natal, South Africa, [illegible] Revenue [illegible] and [illegible]

JAMES BLAIKIE

OF CRAIGIEBUCKLER.

married in 1840 to Dr. Alexander D. Davidson, minister of the West Church of S. Nicholas. Provost James Blaikie died suddenly in the vestibule of the old Town-House, on the 3rd October, 1836, within a month of completing his third year of office. His character, as sketched by his son-in-law in the funeral sermon preached by him, was as follows:—"He was a man of thorough integrity, kindliness of heart, and unruffled evenness of temper. He had deep sagacity, clearness and soundness of judgment, and a wondrous faculty of concentrating his whole mind at once on any subject that was presented to him. He was not only a good man and an upright magistrate, but a Christian. His piety was not obtrusive, but deep and genuine." This estimate of the Provost is borne out by the wording of the vote of thanks given to him by the Council in 1835, when he was thanked "for the very able, courteous, and efficient manner in which he had performed the duties of his office." Mrs. Blaikie died on the 2nd April, 1857, in her sixty-third year.

The memory of Provost Blaikie is still kept green by the beautiful statue in marble—one of the earliest works of the late Sir John Steell, R.S.A.—which now stands in the vestibule of the Town-House, having been fortunately removed from Drum's Aisle before the disastrous fire of 1874. His portrait, painted by John Phillip, R.A., also hangs in the Town-Hall, and the representation here given is taken from the beautiful engraving of the portrait by J. E. Coombs, executed in 1838.

Provost Blaikie took a great interest in the rebuilding of Marischal College, and it was principally through his exertions and the aid of Alexander Bannerman, M.P., that the Government were finally induced to contribute the sum necessary to make the scheme of rebuilding possible. Their efforts thus brought to a successful issue, the foundation-stone of the new buildings was to have been laid by him during the month in which he died. Other matters which occupied the attention of the Council during the three years above mentioned were the abolition of the office of public executioner; the preparation of a memorial

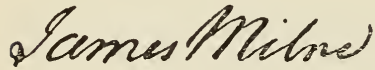
to the Commissioners on Burghs, asking that a stipendiary magistrate be appointed and paid for by Government; the demolition of the old East Church, built in the latter quarter of the fifteenth century, and the erection of the present structure. It will be observed that the duration of the office of provost was, under the Reform Act of 1833, altered from two to three years.

1836-38.

CXXIX. **James Milne**

(Council Reg., LXXIV., 89).

Provost Milne was a member of the first Reform Council, having been elected at the head of the poll for the Second Ward, and, as senior baillie, he naturally stepped into the civic chair on the sudden death of Provost James Blaikie. Provost Milne was a partner of the firm of Milne, Low, & Co., manufacturers, was married to Jean Mitchell, but had no issue. He died on 4th October, 1841, aged eighty years, and was survived by his wife, who died on the 17th May, 1853, aged eighty-three years. During his term of office the rejoicings on the accession and coronation of Her Majesty took place, and from a glance at the official programme, the demonstrations appear to have taken place on a large scale. Provost Milne, on the expiry of his term, came before the electors of the Second Ward at November, 1839, but failed to find a place among the two candidates chosen to represent the ward, and he consequently retired from public life.



An interesting notice of Provost Milne is given in "Circuit Journeys," by the late Lord Cockburn, in which he says "we had a most diverting party at the Provost's on Saturday; a quadrille party and a solid supper. His name is Milne, an excellent octogenarian Whig, with a queer, out-of-the-way, capacious, old-fashioned house, and a still more queer and old-

fashioned wife, but nice, kind, respectable, natural, happy bodies, with all manner of substantial comforts, and the accent and dialect of the place in great purity—much kindness and much laughter we had."

1839-46.

CXXX. Sir Thomas Blaikie

(Council Reg., LXXV., 128; *LXXVII.*, 3).

Provost Thomas Blaikie was a younger son of John Blaikie and his wife Helen Richardson, and a brother of Provost James Blaikie (128). Born in 1801, he received a liberal education, and became a partner in the business formed by his father, John Blaikie & Sons, besides being himself founder and partner in Blaikie Brothers, iron founders. Provost Blaikie married, on 28th November, 1828, Agnes Dingwall, the sixth daughter of Alexander Dingwall, afterwards of Rannieston, by his wife Janet Abercrombie. The issue of this marriage was three sons and seven daughters, as follows:—George Thomson, born in 1844, died 1853; Thomas, married 28th March, 1874, Constance Mary Hill; John, for some time in Madras, and latterly settled in London, died September, 1890; Janet or Jessie, married September, 1851, General Henry Hyde R.E.: Helen, married her cousin, Anthony Adrian Blaikie; Agnes Dingwall, married, August, 1853, William G. Bateson, solicitor, Liverpool; Jane, married, April, 1858, Captain Henry R. Brownlow, R.A.; Margaret Jopp, married, November, 1859, David O. Bateson, merchant, Liverpool; Anna Thomson, married, December, 1865, George Ross, merchant, Calcutta; and Emily, the youngest daughter. In consideration of the public services rendered by himself and his brother to the community, he was

knighted in 1856. His death occurred quite suddenly on the 25th September, 1861, at the age of sixty years. Lady Blaikie survived her husband, and died in London in 1886.

To enumerate even briefly the many public works carried out by Sir Thomas would take up considerable space, suffice it to say that he took a leading part in obtaining the Harbour Act of 1843, under which the present docks were constructed, and other improvements carried out at a cost of nearly £155,000, that his great influence was used in furthering the local railway schemes, and that his interest was very large in promoting such concerns as the Market, the Mechanics' Institution, the Asylum for the Blind, &c. He carried out also the widening of the Bridge of Dee in 1842, and the details of the construction and completion of Marischal College received his special attention. Perhaps of all the schemes with which his name was connected, Provost Blaikie is best remembered for the great improvement scheme which he formulated and laid before the Council in 1846. By the proposed bill a new body was to be called into existence, consisting of three members from the Town Council, two from the Incorporated Trades, two from the Police Board, and six members elected by the ratepayers. The powers to be conferred upon this Board were of a very sweeping character, and included the abolition of the Bell and Petty Customs, the acquisition of the New Market, with power to build a new cattle market and slaughter-house, the purchase of the United Gas Company's works, and the formation of several new streets, which, had they been carried out, would have altered considerably the present configuration of the city. The Town Council adopted a resolution approving the Provost's scheme, except that part dealing with the markets and gasworks, which they were of opinion would be better in private hands. A subsequent meeting of the citizens was held, and a joint committee of the Council and citizens appointed to examine the details of the proposed bill, including provision for a tax, which was restricted to 4d. per £1 on owners, and half that sum on occupiers. This report was

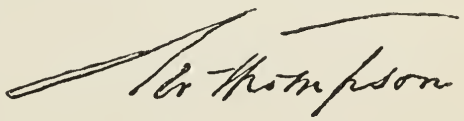
submitted to a Head Court of the citizens held in the quadrangle of Marischal College on the 25th January, 1847, when by a majority of two to one, the bill was rejected. Provost Blaikie at once withdrew the bill, and at the ensuing November retired from the Council

1847-49.

CXXXI. George Thompson, Junior, of Pitmedden

(Council Reg., LXXVIII., 90).

Provost Thompson was the son of Andrew Thompson, of the H.E.I.S., by Anne, a daughter of Andrew Stephen, Rubislaw. Born at Woolwich in 1804, he was brought to Aberdeen on his father's death when only two years of age, and received his education at the Grammar School. Entering the office of the London Shipping Company, he received an excellent training in commercial life, which stood him in good stead when, in 1825, he commenced business on his own account as a ship and insurance broker. Mr. Thompson started a line of vessels to trade between this country and Australia, and this service, now called the "Aberdeen Line," is well and honourably known as one of the most efficient lines of vessels afloat.



The Provost married, in 1830, Christian Little, a daughter of the Rev. Dr. Kidd, by whom he had issue four sons and four daughters:—Stephen, Cornelius, and George, all members of the firm of George Thompson & Co., and James; Jane Boyd, married to Lord Provost Sir William Henderson; Annie, married to John Crombie of Danestone; Agnes Elizabeth, married to Rev. Andrew Doak, of Trinity Free Church, Aberdeen; and a daughter who died young.

Provost Thompson died on the 11th April, 1895, aged ninety-one years, while Mrs. Thompson died on the 17th January, 1874.

His portrait, painted by Sir George Reid, *P.*R.S.A., in recognition of the many services rendered to the city, was hung in the Town-Hall in 1880.

Mr. Thompson entered the Town Council in the capacity of dean of guild in 1840, an office which he held for that and the succeeding year. In 1842 he was returned for the First Ward, and served for three years as a councillor. For the next two years he was not in the Council, but at the November election of 1847 he was chosen provost. During his term of office, Provost Thompson had the honour of presenting Her Majesty with an address on the occasion of her arrival at the Victoria Dock, 7th September, 1848, and also of offering for the Queen's acceptance the silver keys of the city. On the same memorable occasion the Prince Consort was admitted an honorary burgess of the city. This visit of Her Majesty, it is worthy of observation, was her first acquaintance with Balmoral, and remarkable for the fact that since 1650, when Charles II. passed through Aberdeen, no reigning sovereign had paid the city a visit. The historical occasion has been pourtrayed in the painting by Mr. P. Cleland, which has lately come into the possession of the Corporation. The Provost in his official capacity was present at the opening, in 1848, of the southern branch of the Aberdeen railway, and was in office when, in 1850, the line was opened to Ferryhill. Other outstanding events connected with his tenure of office were the laying the foundation-stone of the East Poorhouse in 1848, the presentation of the freedom of the city to Sir Robert Peel in October, 1849, and the celebrations in 1850 connected with the centenary of the opening of Robert Gordon's Hospital.

On the expiry of his term of office in November, 1850, Provost Thompson was strongly urged to allow himself to be re-elected as provost for a second period of three years, but he did not see his way to acquiesce, although he remained in the Council without office for other two years.

At the general election of 1852 he reluctantly came forward and contested the city against Sir Andrew Leith Hay, and was

successful, having polled 682 votes against his opponent's 478. Mr. Thompson represented the city in Parliament till the general election of 1857, when he retired. From that date till his death he took no active part in the management of public affairs, but, nevertheless, he never ceased to have a keen interest in everything affecting the welfare and progress of the city.

In 1857, Mr. Thompson purchased the estate of Pitmedden, Dyce, and in 1864 he acquired that of Rannieshill, in the parish of Newmachar.

1850-52.

CXXXII. **George Henry**

(Council Reg., LXXIX., 88).

Provost Henry was a native of Aberdeen, and was born in 1784. He received his early education in Robert Gordon's Hospital, and learned the trade of a weaver, which he seems to have early abandoned, and entered the service of Hugh Gordon and Co., better known as the Copper Company, of which he became the senior partner. Provost Henry was unmarried at his death, which occurred on the 3rd March, 1867, at the advanced age of eighty-two years, having by his "kind and unostentatious manner endeared himself to all in every relation of life with whom he came in contact."

Provost Henry was a member of the Town Council before it was "reformed," having first entered public life in 1822. After the passing of the Reform Act of 1833 he again entered the Council in 1838, when he was elected master of kirk and bridge works, and a baillie in 1841. This latter office he held till the November election of 1849, when, on his re-election by his constituents of the First Ward, he elected to remain a simple

councillor till his call to fill the civic chair in the following year, when Provost Thompson refused to be again nominated. Provost Henry was present in his official capacity at the fêtes held in connection with the great exhibition of 1851, and subsequently went to Paris to attend the fêtes Napoleon. During his term of office great advances were made in connection with railway extensions locally. On the 16th March, 1850, the first railway train entered the Ferryhill Station, and two years later the first turf was cut of the Deeside Railway, and also of the Great North of Scotland Railway (Kittybrewster to Huntly). He was in office when the line from Aberdeen to Banchory was formally opened on the 7th September, 1853.

An admirable portrait of the Provost, painted by John Phillip, R.A., in 1845, is in possession of one of his nieces, while another portrait, painted in 1851 for the Weaver Incorporation by John Mitchell, hangs on the walls of the Incorporated Trades Hall.

1853-55.

130. Sir THOMAS BLAIKIE

(Council Reg., LXXX., 143).

The outbreak of the Russian war was the means of the Council's attention being drawn to the unprotected state of the harbour and shipping, and the Government were memorialised on the subject. During November, 1854, the city was connected with the south by means of the electric telegraph, while Sir Thomas' last year of office was chiefly occupied by a renewal of the negotiations regarding the possibility of union between the two colleges.

1856-58.

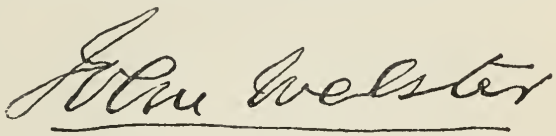
CXXXIII. John Webster of Edgehill

(Council Reg., LXXXI., 169).

Provost Webster was a son of Alexander Webster, advocate in Aberdeen, and was born in 1810. He married, in 1839,

Margaret Chalmers, a daughter of David Chalmers of Westburn, by whom he had issue, a son, Alexander, advocate in Aberdeen. Provost Webster, like his father, was a member of the Society of Advocates in Aberdeen.

He entered the Council as one of the representatives of the First Ward in November, 1853, and took a leading part in opposing the interference and embankment of the Links by the proposed Aberdeen, Peterhead, and Fraserburgh Railway. In the spring of 1857 he moved that the British Association should be invited to the city,



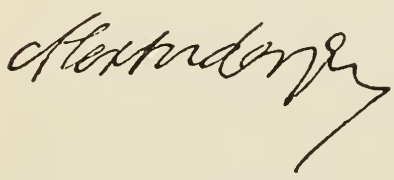
and the invitation being accepted, he was one of the vice-presidents of the meeting held here in September, 1859, which derived distinction from the fact that the Prince Consort was President that year, and attended the opening meeting in the Music Hall. On the Universities question the Provost took an active part, and on two occasions the Council voted him their thanks for his services. He presented the silver keys of the city to Her Majesty on the 15th October, 1857, when passing southward from Haddo House, and during his provostship the freedom of the city was presented to the Earl of Stanhope (26th March, 1858), the Earl of Airlie (18th March, 1859), and Lord John Russell (28th September, 1859). In March, 1861, he was appointed assessor to the Lord Rector of the University, which gave him a seat at the University Court, which he continued to hold till 1880. The University in 1877 conferred upon him the honorary degree of LL.D. At the general election of 1880 he was elected as the Parliamentary representative of the city in opposition to the late James Shaw, iron merchant, Wales, who had only 3139 votes against Mr. Webster's 7505, and he continued to represent the city in the Liberal interest till the general election in November, 1885, when he retired. Provost Webster died on the 31st May, 1891, aged eighty years.

1859-65.

CXXXIV. Sir Alexander Anderson

(Council Reg., LXXXII., 209).

Sir Alexander Anderson was the only son of Rev. William Anderson, minister of Strichen, by his wife Helen Findlay. Born at Strichen on the 10th June, 1802, he graduated at Marischal College in 1819, and in 1827 was admitted a member of the Society of Advocates. Some few years later he entered into partnership with the late William Adam, and the firm of Adam and Anderson was in existence till 1867, when it was dissolved. On 26th March, 1835, he married Rachel Johnston, elder daughter of William Johnston of Viewfield, by whom he had issue two sons and two daughters—William, born 9th January, 1836, advocate in Aberdeen, died at Brisbane, Australia, 16th January, 1873; Andrew, barrister-at-law of Lincoln's Inn, called, 1865; Catherine Morice, married, 24th November, 1863, to the Rev. Archibald H. Charteris, D.D., now Professor of Biblical Criticism in the University of Edinburgh; and Helen Rachel, unmarried.



In 1836, along with his partner, he promoted the North of Scotland Insurance Company, now known as the Northern Assurance Company, and in the same year the North of Scotland Bank was successfully floated. Following up these, the Aberdeen Market Company was formed in 1838, and the undertaking was finished in 1842 at a cost of nearly £42,000. His next public acts were of the utmost importance to the community, being nothing less than the promotion of those lines of railway which have so benefited the city. In 1845, in face of great opposition, he successfully carried a bill for the construction of the Aberdeen railway between the city and Friockheim, with branches to

Sir ALEXANDER ANDERSON
of Bleelack.

Brechin and Montrose. The following session, bills for the construction of the Great North of Scotland Railway and the Deeside Railway were obtained, but owing to the panic which set in during 1846, these works were delayed till the dates already mentioned.

Sir Alexander entered the Council for the first time in November, 1859, as one of the representatives of the Third Ward, and was unanimously chosen lord provost. His tenure of the chair was practically for the period from 1859 to November, 1866, but it is well to mention that on 27th March, 1860, the Lord Provost resigned on account of a resolution passed by the Council regarding the publication of a correspondence between him and the Lord Justice Clerk relating to University matters. Refusing to withdraw his resignation, a poll of the Third Ward was taken on 26th April, when Sir Alexander was again elected, admitted a councillor *ad interim*, and again called to the chair on 7th May. During his occupation of the chair, he formulated a scheme for supplying the city with water by gravitation, from the Dee, at Cairnton, near Banchory. This scheme was sanctioned by the Police and Waterworks Act of 1862, and the works were opened by the Queen on the 16th October, 1866, having cost over £150,000. On the 13th October, 1863, the Prince Consort's statue, at the corner of Union Terrace, was unveiled by Her Majesty, and on the occasion Lord Provost Anderson received the honour of knighthood in recognition of his many public services. The unveiling of the statue of Her Majesty on the 20th September, 1866, by the Prince of Wales presented a favourable opportunity of adding his name to the roll of honorary burgesses of the city, which was accordingly done. The new Grammar School in Skene Street was built in 1865, chiefly through the Lord Provost's exertions, and before retiring from office he successfully agitated for new Municipal buildings, sanction for which was obtained by the Act of 1866. In 1861 a riding of the outer Marches of the Freedom Lands was conducted in great state. Sir Alexander retired from the Town Council in

1866, and during his later years he successfully promoted in 1875 the Aberdeen Land Association, for the purpose of acquiring feuing ground on the lands of Rubislaw and Torry, the former of which he had acquired from George Skene of Rubislaw in 1860, for the sum of £56,500.

As a mark of the very high esteem in which he was held by his fellow-citizens, his portrait, subscribed for in 1872, and painted by Sir George Reid, *P.*R.S.A., was presented to him, and now hangs in the Town-Hall. A copy of this portrait is here given, from an engraving executed four or five years ago by Mr. Robert S. Clouston. Sir Alexander died on the 11th April, 1887, in the eighty-fifth year of his age, having been predeceased by his wife, who died on 13th December, 1886, in her eighty-first year. Both are interred in S. Nicholas Churchyard, where a granite tablet on the west wall records their deaths.

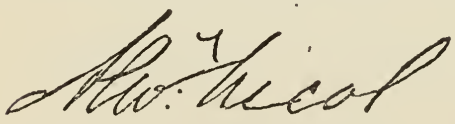
The arms recorded by Sir Alexander Anderson are, argent a saltire engrailed between a crescent in chief, two annulets in the flanks and a boar's head erased in base gules. These arms appear in the stained glass in the staircase of the Court-House buildings, and on the roof of the Town-Hall.

1866-68.

CXXXV. Alexander Nicol

(Council Reg., LXXXV., 414).

Lord Provost Nicol was a son of Patrick Nicol, shipowner and insurance broker, and entered the Town Council for the first time at November, 1847, and in the following year he was elected master of shoreworks. On the occasion of the landing of Her Majesty at Aberdeen in 1848, he was present in



his capacity as shoremaster, and also as provost of Old Aberdeen. While acting as dean of guild he married, on 20th September, 1855, Jane Chalmers, the fifth daughter of David Chalmers of Westburn, by whom he had issue, a son and three daughters—George William, a member of the firm of A. Nicol & Sons, shipowners; Annie, Alice, and Mary.

Lord Provost Nicol took the chief part in obtaining the Harbour Act of 1868, under which the diversion of the river Dee took place, and also the formation of the South Breakwater and extension of the North Pier. A bill dealing with the Guildry funds was promoted in the same year, but was defeated in its main provisions. The erection of a bridge to Torry and the acquisition of Torry Farm were two subjects which occupied the Council during the last year of Lord Provost Nicol's tenure of the chair, and were the cause of much local feeling. The Lord Provost, with his party in the Council, while willing to favourably consider the matter as to the bridge, opposed the purchase of Torry Farm, and the question was made a test at the November election of 1869, when Mr. Nicol and his party were defeated, he failing to get elected.

In his business capacity as a merchant and shipowner, he was the owner of the first Aberdeen clipper vessel, the "Scottish Maid," built in 1839, and the first of a class which for long upheld the prestige of the port for fast-sailing vessels. Lord Provost Nicol, besides his public work in connection with the Town Council, was a Harbour Commissioner from 1841 to 1847, and again from 1860 to 1863, while he was one of the original promoters of the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, of which he was chairman for many years. He died on the 5th May, 1880.

In 1872 the Lord Provost recorded arms as follows—Parted per pale invected azure and argent, a fess between four mascles all counter-changed, and a specimen of the arms is to be seen in the staircase of the Court-House buildings, and in the Town-Hall.

1869-73.

CXXXVI. William Leslie of Rethermuir

(Council Reg., LXXXVII., 222; *LXXXVIII.*, 262).

Lord Provost Leslie was an architect and builder, and a partner in the firm of Macdonald & Leslie, granite merchants. One of the chief works carried out by him was the erection of Dunrobin Castle between 1845-49. He was three times married, his first wife being Mary, a daughter of Robert Watson, manufacturer, Stoneywood, by his wife, Margaret Jaffray. She died on the 21st July, 1853, aged fifty-three years; and on the 20th August, 1861, he married for his second wife Stansmore Read, third daughter of Captain Richmond, inspecting commander of coastguard, who died 11th June, 1867, aged fifty-four years. Lord Provost Leslie married for his third wife, on the 3rd December, 1874, Katherine E. Primrose, a daughter of the late Rev. William Primrose, Aberdeen.

Mr. Leslie entered the Council in 1859, but did not hold any office till his election to the lord provost's chair in 1869. During his period of office the diversion of the river Dee was carried out, the first turf being cut on 22nd December, 1869, and the Municipal buildings completed in 1872. In 1871 the Municipality Extension Act was obtained, whereby the boundary of the city was much enlarged, and the functions of the Police Commissioners were undertaken by the Town Council. The gasworks, which up to this date had remained the property of a private company, were also taken over by the Council. In the same year, 26th September, he conferred the freedom of the city on Mr. Gladstone, "in testimony of the estimation in which the Council held his public services, and of his eminence as a statesman." Before he demitted office in 1874, the Council resolved, on 21st September, to confer the freedom of the city on the Right Hon. Benjamin Disraeli, "in testimony of his eminence as a statesman and his distinguished

literary attainments." The compliment was accepted by Disraeli, but a fitting occasion for formally presenting it never occurred. In the following year he presented the keys of the city to Her Majesty when passing through the city on her way to Dunrobin. The extension of the North Pier, sanctioned by the Harbour Act of 1868, was begun in 1874, when the foundation-stone of the new work was laid by the Duke of Edinburgh on 5th September.

In 1872, Mr. Leslie bought the estate of Nethermuir, in the parish of New Deer, of which, it is understood, he was a native. He was one of the promoters of the Aberdeen Jute Company, was a Justice of the Peace, and a Deputy-Lieutenant of the County.

Lord Provost Leslie died on the 18th February, 1879, aged seventy-seven years, having been born on the 15th March, 1802, and is interred in the churchyard of Oldmachar.

The arms borne by the Lord Provost, and recorded in 1872, were, parted per pale argent and or, on a bend azure between two crosses flory gules, three buckles of the second, and a specimen in colour is to be seen in the stained glass at the Court-House already alluded to, and on the roof of the Town-Hall.

1874-79.

CXXXVII. George Jamieson of Rosebank

(Council Reg., CX., 367; CXII., 353).

Lord Provost Jamieson was born in Perth about 1809, but came to the city early in life along with his parents, his father having received an appointment with the Aberdeen Copper Company. While still young, he was apprenticed to the grocery business under the late Mr. Robert Troup, and for more than fifty years he carried on business on his own account, latterly as senior partner in the wholesale firm of Jamieson & Mitchell.

The first connection Mr. Jamieson had with public life was in 1839 as a member of the Police Board, where he served as a representative of the First Ward till 1841, when he retired.

Entering public life again, he was chosen as dean of guild in 1860, and held the office for three years, when he entered the Council as one of the chosen of the First Ward. In 1866 he again became dean, and held the office for a second triennium. During his occupancy of the dean's chair, Mr. Jamieson took an active part in endeavouring to get the affairs of the Guildry transferred to the management of the guild brethren, and a bill to effect this was drafted in 1861, another in 1868, and the agitation was renewed in 1877, but the endeavours to arrive at a settlement of this long-standing dispute as to the management of the funds were unsuccessful on each occasion. In other matters coming before the Council he took a leading part, and closely identified himself with the work carried out by Sir Alexander Anderson and Lord Provost Nicol.

On relinquishing the deanship in 1869, Mr. Jamieson retired from the Council till 1872 when he was returned unopposed as one of the representatives of the Fourth Ward, and in November, 1874, he was elected to the chair, which he held for a period of six years. During his term of office as lord provost the balance of the improvements contemplated under the Harbour Act of 1868 were carried out, and "Provost Jamieson's Quay" is a reminder of the part he took in the promotion of the Harbour Act of 1879. A proposal to carry out an Improvement Bill in 1876, which provided, among other things, for the conveying of the sewage of the city across the Don to Murcar links, met with so much opposition that it was abandoned. The rebuilding of the East Church and S. Nicholas tower, and the construction of the Victoria Bridge over the Dee to Torry, were works of public importance carried out during his *regime*. The opening of the new Post Office in October, 1875, the meeting of the Social

Science Congress in September, 1877, the collection and administration of a fund for the relief of the sufferers by the failure of the City of Glasgow Bank, and the abolition, on 1st September, 1879, of the Bell and Petty customs, were also events that came within the period embraced by his provostship. Other schemes conceived but not carried to completion were the purchase of ground at Allenvale—the first step towards carrying out the Duthie Park; the converting of the wooded bank at Union Terrace into a public garden, and the purchase of ground for a projected street to Rosemount where Esslemont Avenue now is.

Besides his work in the Town Council, Lord Provost Jamieson was chairman of S. Nicholas Parochial Board from 1864 to 1868, a director of the North of Scotland Bank and other public companies, and for several years he was chairman of the Aberdeen District Tramways Company.

Lord Provost Jamieson was twice married, his first wife being Ann Henry, a niece of Provost Henry (132), who died on 22nd December, 1858, aged forty-eight years, and his second wife, whom he married on 2nd February, 1875, Mary, daughter of George Milne of Kinaldie, and widow of the Rev. T. A. Dawson, of Monymusk. By his first marriage he had no family, but by his second marriage he had a daughter, Georgina Eva. On the occasion of his second marriage the Lord Provost was presented by the Town Council and Harbour Commissioners with a piece of silver plate.

Mr. Jamieson died at his residence, 19 Queen's Road, on the 2nd February, 1893, aged eighty-four years.

1880-82.

CXXXVIII. **Peter Esslemont**

(Council Reg., XCIV., 165).

Lord Provost Esslemont was the son of Peter Esslemont, farmer, by his wife Ann Connon, and was born at Balnakettle, in the parish of Udny, in 1834. His education was received at the

parish school, and at an early age he became apprenticed to Mr. William Shirras, wholesale draper and manufacturer in Aberdeen. In 1858 Mr. Esslemont commenced business on his own account, and latterly, in partnership with Mr. William Macintosh and his two sons, George B. and James Esslemont, he carried on a large wholesale and retail trade.

Mr. Esslemont entered the Town Council for the first time at the November election of 1869 as one of the members for the Second Ward, having, along with the late Baillie George Robb, fought and defeated the opponents of the scheme for the purchase of Torry farm. As a member of the "Party of Progress," Mr. Esslemont devoted considerable attention to all the details of the Municipality Extension Act of 1871, which provided for the amalgamation of the Police Board with the Town Council, the extension of the boundary, and the purchase of the gasworks. At the election in November, 1871, occasioned by this Act, he was again returned for the Second Ward, became a magistrate the same year, and senior baillie in 1874. Retiring from the Council at November, 1875, Mr. Esslemont served a term of three years as a member of the School Board, and at the election of 1877 he came forward as the opponent of Mr. Jamieson, the retiring lord provost, but, failing to get elected, he was, on 3rd December, 1877, chosen as a councillor *ad interim* in place of Baillie Robert Urquhart, who had died quite suddenly. The following year he was returned unopposed, and was elected to the magistracy as fifth baillie. On the retirement of Lord Provost Jamieson at November, 1880, Mr. Esslemont expressed his willingness to waive his claim to the chair in favour of Mr. James Matthews, but the latter not then seeing his way to accept office, Mr. Esslemont, who had again been returned unopposed, was elected lord provost. His tenure of office was marked by the completion of many works of great public utility, while a scheme of improvements was inaugurated, which, as now carried out, has proved

of the greatest possible convenience to the city generally. In 1881 Parliamentary sanction was obtained for carrying out additions to the waterworks, and the purchase of the estate of Arthurseat for the purpose of the munificent gift of a public park by Miss Duthie of Ruthrieston. On 2nd July, 1881, the Victoria Bridge was opened for traffic, and on the 27th August of the same year the first turf of the Duthie Park was cut. The following year saw the demolition of the old weigh-house, and a commencement made with the erection of new harbour offices, and the construction of a graving dock, while a direct access was obtained to the Rosemount district by the opening up of Rose Street and the formation of Esslemont Avenue. Lord Provost Esslemont took also an active interest in the movement for having a suitable building for an Art Gallery and Museum, which resulted in the erection of the gallery at Schoolhill, and before the expiry of his term he had the pleasure of seeing this building almost finished, and made complete by an important adjunct, in the School of Art gifted by the late Councillor John Gray. On the 27th September, 1883, the Duthie Park was opened with great ceremony by H.R.H. Princess Beatrice, and on 3rd November, a few days before demitting office, he conferred the freedom of the city on the Earl of Aberdeen and the Rt. Hon. Sir Richard A. Cross, M.P. In connection with the various institutions in the city the Lord Provost took great interest, and in none more so than in Robert Gordon's Hospital, which, during his provostship was transformed, in 1881, into a college for secondary and technical education. Mr. Esslemont's provostship, however, will be most remembered for the extensive Improvement Act carried through in 1883, which provided new accesses to the Rosemount and Ferryhill districts, a direct road to the Links, and the improvement of several other streets in the city, besides considerably extending the boundaries of the burgh. Although all the powers contained in the Act have not been exercised, it will still rank as one of the most important Acts that have been passed for the improvement and beautifying of the city.

At the expiry of his term of three years in November, 1883, Mr. Esslemont did not seek re-election, but in 1885 he became the Liberal candidate for East Aberdeenshire, and was elected over his opponent, Mr. Gordon of Esslemont, by a majority of 3,354 votes. In 1886, and again in 1892, his seat was contested, but on each occasion he was returned by a large majority over his opponents, and continued to represent the constituency till December, 1892, when his appointment as Chairman of the Scotch Fishery Board terminated his Parliamentary career.

Mr. Esslemont was twice married, his first wife, whom he married on 14th July, 1857, being Georgina Anna, only daughter of George Birnie, brewer, Strichen. Mrs. Esslemont died on 17th November, 1871, aged thirty-seven years, and in 1876 Mr. Esslemont married as his second wife Mary Anna, only daughter of the late Rev. W. Bradford Sherwood. By these marriages there was a family of five sons and five daughters.

Recognition of Mr. Esslemont's services to the community was made on the 10th November, 1885, when his portrait, painted by Sir George Reid, *P.*R.S A., was handed over to the Town Council by a large and representative body of subscribers, for preservation in the Town-Hall. In 1896 a bronze bust of the Lord Provost, from the model of F. Edwin Elwell, S.A.A., was presented by subscribers to the Art Gallery.

Mr. Esslemont died at his residence, 34 Albyn Place, on the 8th August, 1894, aged sixty years.

1883-85.

CXXXIX. James Matthews of Springbill.

Lord Provost Matthews is the oldest son of the late Peter Matthews, teller in the Commercial Bank of Aberdeen, by his wife, Margaret Ross, youngest daughter of William Ross, architect and builder, who erected the Union Bridge. Receiving his education in Aberdeen, Mr. Matthews was apprenticed to the late

JAMES MATTHEWS

OF SPRINGHILL.

Archibald Simpson, architect, and afterwards spent five years in the office of the late Sir Gilbert Scott, London, pursuing his profession. On returning to his native city he began business on his own account, and latterly in partnership with Mr. A. Marshall Mackenzie, A.R.S.A., the firm has carried out many important works. Mr. Matthews' originality and ability have been stamped on such buildings as the Grammar School, Free Church College, Town and County Bank buildings, Palace buildings, the Free West Church, Music Hall, Rubislaw Terrace, and country mansions, such as Ardo, Brucklay Castle, Desswood, Glack, Monboddo, Brotherton, Stoneywood, Ellon, Warthill, Rothie-Norman, Ballogie, and Inglismaldie. Some of the work carried out by the firm have been no less important, as the Northern Assurance buildings, Harbour offices, Art Gallery and Gray's School of Art, Free South Church, &c.

Mr. Matthews entered the Town Council in November, 1863, as the colleague of Sir Alexander Anderson for the Third Ward, and held his seat for that ward till the election in November, 1871, when he did not seek re-election as under the provisions of the Act of that year, the whole Council retired. As already noticed, Mr. Matthews was approached in 1880, on the retirement of Lord Provost Jamieson, with a view to his accepting the chair, but not seeing his way to accept office at that time, he did not enter the Council till the November election of 1883, when, elected for Rubislaw Ward, he was chosen lord provost. Prior to this date, however, Mr. Matthews had served a term of three years (1879-1882) as a member of the School Board.

The work connected with the carrying out of the Improvements Act of 1883 was entered upon at once, and Mr. Matthews' practical experience was of great value in connection with the important works sanctioned by the Act. During the three years covered by Mr. Matthews' provostship the Rosemount Viaduct

was constructed, the Riverside Road opened up as an access to the Duthie Park, a provisional order, applied for in 1884 to improve the area known as the Shorelands, was put in operation, and in 1885 an Act was passed conferring powers to obtain a larger supply and increase the storage of water for the city. On the 25th March, 1884, the Public Libraries Act was adopted, and the Directors of the Mechanics' Institution handed over their library and the building in Market Street as the nucleus of a public library; and in December of the same year the Art Gallery was completed and formally opened. Several public ceremonies of more than passing interest took place during Mr. Matthews' term, as on 28th August, 1884, when Their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princess of Wales, presented new colours to the 3rd Battalion Gordon Highlanders (Militia); the presentation of the freedom of the city to the Earl of Rosebery, on 17th September of the same year, in recognition of the "high appreciation of his personal character and distinguished abilities, and the prominent part he has taken in public affairs;" the meeting of the Trades Union Congress in September, 1884, and the following year that of the British Association from the 9th to the 17th September, during which Mr. Matthews had a large house party at Springhill.

Mr. Matthews married on 2nd June, 1846, Eliza, daughter of William Duncan, merchant in Aberdeen, and a sister of the late Charles Duncan, advocate and procurator-fiscal for the county, by whom he had issue one son, James Duncan, who died 24th November, 1891, aged thirty-nine years, and four daughters. Mr. Matthews purchased the estate of Springhill, near Aberdeen, in 1883, from the trustees of the Misses M'Pherson.

The Lord Provost had the honorary degree of LL.D. conferred upon him by the University, during the celebrations connected with the completion of the Mitchell Tower and Graduation Hall, and in vacating the chair, at the expiry of his term, the Town Council adopted the following resolution:—"That the Town Council desire to record their thanks to Lord Provost Matthews

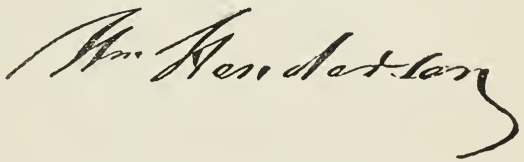
Sir WILLIAM HENDERSON
of Devanha.

for his valuable services to the city and community during his occupancy of the civic chair, and their appreciation of the ability and courtesy with which he has discharged the onerous and important duties of the office."

1886-88.

CXL. Sir William Henderson of Devanha House.

Lord Provost Sir William Henderson is the son of James Henderson, by his wife Helen Thomson, and was born at Aberdour (Aberdeenshire) in 1826. At an early age he was apprenticed to the North of Scotland Bank, and in 1850 became a partner in the firm of George Thompson and Co., shipowners. For three years from 1854 he resided in London, organising and commencing the business of the firm of which he is now the senior partner, but afterwards returning to the city, he has resided at Devanha House, which he acquired in 1857. The firm of George Thompson & Co. have pioneered an entirely new route of monthly steamers from London, to and from Australia, *via* Cape Town, and they carry the mails between South Africa and Australia. Their fleet of steamers and sailing ships during a year cover a distance of no less than 578,000 knots.



The Lord Provost's first entry into public life was in December, 1869, when he became one of the elected Harbour Commissioners, and this connection he maintained till December, 1881. He was President of the Chamber of Commerce during 1874-5, and entered the Town Council at the November election of 1885 as a representative of Ferryhill Ward, and a probable candidate for the chair, to which he was unanimously elected the following year.

During his tenure of the provostship several important works were carried out at the harbour, specially the construction of a cattle landing stage and sheds, and the erection of a new fish market and wharf. Two splendid statues were added to the scanty number possessed by the city; the first, unveiled on 19th June, 1888, of General C. G. Gordon, was presented by the members of the clan Gordon, and that of Sir William Wallace, unveiled on the 29th of the same month, was provided through the liberality of the late John Steill of Edinburgh. On the latter occasion the ceremony of unveiling was performed by the Marquis of Lorne, and advantage was taken of his presence in the city to add his name to the roll of honorary burgesses, "in recognition of his high personal character, and his services while Governor-General of the Dominion of Canada." The interesting ceremony of riding the marches of the burgh's freedom lands, which had not taken place since 1861, was carried out in great style on 4th September, 1889, and proved a most enjoyable outing to the large company who took part in the perambulation of the marches. A resolution of the Council, adopted on 6th June, 1887, that an official robe should be provided for the lord provost, was really a reviving of the old act of Council, passed in 1743, that the chief magistrate should wear a distinctive dress. The robe was first worn by Mr. Henderson on the occasion when he attended the Queen's Jubilee service in Westminster Abbey. Mr. Henderson's triennium was rendered specially memorable from the fact that he inaugurated and successfully carried out a large extension of the Royal Infirmary buildings as a local commemoration of Her Majesty's Jubilee in 1887. The sum raised was considerably over £30,000, and in recognition of the Lord Provost's handsome donation and interest in the matter, one of the wards in the new surgical pavilion was named after him. The inscription in the ward records that this honour was done "in commemoration of his services as original promoter of the Jubilee Hospital Extension Scheme, toward which he contributed handsomely, other large sums being also obtained through his personal influence."

It is acknowledged that, in accommodation and furnishings, the hospital, by these extensions, has now been placed in a position second to none in the kingdom. An address of congratulation from the Town Council, on the attainment of her jubilee was presented to Her Majesty at Windsor Castle, on the 27th June, 1887, by the Lord Provost and Town Clerk.

On his retirement from the chair in 1889, the Town Council adopted the following resolution :—"In concluding their labours under the presidency of Lord Provost Henderson, the magistrates and Town Council desire to express their recognition of the ability and courtesy which he has displayed in the occupancy of the chair, as well as their appreciation of the important services rendered by his lordship to the city and community of Aberdeen."

Lord Provost Henderson married on 17th February, 1852, Jane Boyd, eldest daughter of Provost Thompson (131), by whom he had issue six sons and eight daughters. Mrs. Henderson died at Devanha House on the 22nd April, 1889.

In 1893 the Lord Provost received the honour of knighthood, and at the University celebrations of 1895 the honorary degree of LL.D. was conferred upon him. Sir William is a deputy-lieutenant for Aberdeenshire, and a director of the North of Scotland Bank and the Scottish Employers' Liability and Accident Insurance Company.

The Town Council having resolved in April, 1891, to add his armorial bearings to those already on the roof of the Town-Hall, he recorded arms the following year as follows—Azure three piles or, in base a tower triple-towered argent, masoned sable, doors and windows gules, on a chief ermine a crescent of the first, between two stars of six points of the third ; motto, "Sola virtus nobilitat."

1889-94.

CXLI. Sir David Stewart of Banchory.

Lord Provost Sir David Stewart is the eldest son of the late Mr. John Stewart of Banchory and Leggart, by his wife Mary

Irvine. Born in 1835, he received his education at Dr. Tulloch's Academy, the Gymnasium, and King's College, where he graduated M.A. in 1855, and thereafter joined his father in business as a member of the firm of Messrs. S. R. Stewart & Co., the largest combmaking industry in the world.

Sir David Stewart commenced his public life as president of the Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce, which he held for two years, 1883-84, and in 1885 he was elected dean of guild, and for the subsequent four years held that office, being unanimously re-elected each year. He also served for three years, 1885-88, as a member of the School Board, and in November, 1889, he entered the Town Council as one of the representatives of Ferryhill Ward, and was elected lord provost. At the expiry of his term of three years in 1892, the Lord Provost, at the unanimous request of his fellow-councillors, and the members of the Harbour Board, agreed to serve for a further period of two years, which was ultimately extended to the full triennium. In April of the same year he was entertained by the Town Council and Harbour Commissioners to a complimentary dinner.

During the six years of Lord Provost Stewart's *regime* much important work was accomplished by the Town Council, foremost amongst which must be classed the Aberdeen Corporation Act of 1891. This Act extended the city boundary so as to include Old Aberdeen, Woodside, and Torry, thus making the area of the city 6,694 acres, the largest, with the exception of Glasgow, of any town in Scotland. This extension has placed the city in a position to control the public health, roads, sewers, &c., within such an area as will provide for the future expansion of the city on lines which will prove of the greatest advantage to the citizens generally. In 1893 an Act was obtained for the purpose of largely extending the gasworks and increasing the storage capacity for

water, and especially to provide, by means of irrigation farms at Kincardine O'Neil, Aboyne, Ballater, and Braemar, for the purification of the water supply. The opening of the public library buildings at Schoolhill Viaduct on 5th July, 1892; new burgh court-house and police buildings in Lodge Walk, in September, 1895; a new bathing station at the sea beach, and a large extension of the City Hospital, were works initiated and partly completed during his provostship. The improvement of Union Terrace, the widening of Justice Street, the opening up of Huntly Street, and the improvement at Berryden Road, might be mentioned as among the more important of the street improvements carried out, while the improvement of the Exchequer Row area was planned and passed by the Town Council. Mrs. Stewart, in presence of the Town Council, on 27th February, 1894, inaugurated within the Town House, the electric lighting of the city. At Woodside a new public park was opened on 9th June, 1894, as part of the agreement under the Act of 1891, and in compliment to the Lord Provost it was named after him. The opening of the new surgical pavilion and other buildings at the Royal Infirmary by H.R.H. Princess Louise, on 4th October, 1892; the opening of the sale of the North-Eastern Branch of the Home Industries Association by H.R.H. the Princess Beatrice, on the 14th of the same month; the presentation of the freedom of the city to W. A. Hunter, M.P., 7th February, 1890; H. M. Stanley, 17th June, 1890; and Andrew Carnegie, 5th July, 1892; the acceptance on behalf of the city of a statue of Burns, at Union Terrace, 15th September, 1892; and another of Her Majesty, the gift of the Royal tradesmen, in 1893; the presentation of an address to the Duke of York on 25th July, 1894, while attending the show of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, may be mentioned among some of the many official duties which fell to be discharged by the Lord Provost. As the result of a local inquiry held in December, 1894, the parishes of S. Nicholas, Old Machar, and Nigg, so far as within the city boundary, were amalgamated into one, as the Aberdeen City parish.

In Harbour matters also much fell to be done during these six years. The Fish Market in Commercial Road, opened in 1889, had to be extended to 1,000 feet—or doubled in extent—by 1891, while new wharves were erected at Albert Basin costing £20,000, cattle sheds at Pocra at an outlay of £5,200; the navigation channel deepened, Market Quay greatly improved, and a resolution adopted to rebuild Regent Bridge and widen Regent Quay. Altogether, during the period from 1889 to 1895, new works costing £87,000, were paid for, while the liabilities of the Trust were reduced by over £54,000, and yet, notwithstanding this, an Act was obtained in 1895, by which an adjustment of rates was made, resulting in a relief to traders of £4,000 per annum, and this was followed in 1896 by a second reduction representing a further sum of £8,000 a year.

In 1889 the Lord Provost became, *ex officio*, a member of the newly-constituted University Court, and his name will always be most honourably associated with the large scheme of building extension subsequently carried out at Marischal College. As a member of the Town Council and University Court, his interest in the scheme was very great, and he had the satisfaction during his term of getting the Council to promote a Bill to enable the University to acquire the ground on which the new buildings are to be erected, and of seeing considerably over £100,000 contributed towards the object in view, of which the late Charles Mitchell, LL.D., gave £21,000, the Government, £40,000; the Town Council, £10,000, and the Lord Provost, £1,000. On his retirement from the civic chair in 1895, Sir David Stewart was chosen by the Lord Rector as his assessor at the University Court, and his experience and interest were thus retained for the welfare of the University for a further period. At the celebrations in 1895 his exertions on behalf of his Alma Mater were recognised by the conferring on him of the honorary degree of LL.D.

At the general election in July, 1895, the Lord Provost, on the pressing invitation of the Unionist Association, came forward

as their candidate for South Aberdeen, in opposition to Dr. James Bryce, the sitting member, but he was unsuccessful, having polled 3,121 votes against 3,985 for Dr. Bryce.

Lord Provost Stewart's success and acceptability in the civic chair gained for him a great popularity with all classes of the community, which was second only to the esteem in which he was held by his fellow councillors, as is testified by the unanimous adoption by the Town Council of the following minute, on his retirement:—"In concluding their labours under the presidency of Lord Provost Stewart, the Town Council desire to place on record their appreciation of the services which his lordship has rendered to the city and community of Aberdeen. Elected unanimously for a second time to the office of Lord Provost, he has, by his ability, tact, and geniality, assisted greatly in carrying on the varied business which has occupied the attention of the Council. In demitting office, Lord Provost Stewart will, no doubt, carry with him many pleasing reminiscences of his occupancy of the civic chair, but the Council trust that not the least among these will be the assurance of the esteem and regard in which he is held by those with whom he has been associated in municipal life."

Sir David Stewart married, on 19th July, 1860, Margaret Dyce, eldest daughter of Principal David Brown, by his wife Catherine Dyce, and a grand-daughter of Provost Alexander Brown (127), by whom he had five sons and six daughters, of whom David Brown Douglas and William Dyce are members of the firm of S. R. Stewart & Co.

On 20th March, 1896, the Lord Provost's portrait, painted by W. Q. Orchardson, R.A., was handed over to the custody of the city by a large body of subscribers, representative of the city and county, while at the same time a piece of silver plate was presented to Mrs. Stewart. A few months later the honour of knighthood was conferred on Mr. Stewart at Balmoral, and this additional recognition of his public services was received with the liveliest satisfaction by the community. Sir David Stewart is a

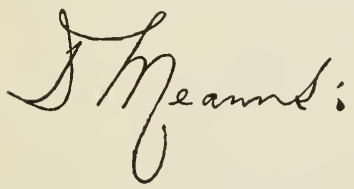
deputy-lieutenant of Aberdeenshire and Kincardineshire, a liveryman of the city of London, and a director of the Great North of Scotland Railway, and the Northern Assurance Company. In January of 1895, Mr. Stewart endowed, at a cost of £600, a bed in the Sick Children's Hospital called the "Banchory House" Cot.

In 1891 the Lord Provost recorded arms as follows—Or, a fess chequy azure and argent between two leopards' faces in chief gules, and a galley in base sable, flagged of the fourth; motto, "Salus per Christum." These arms are included in the series on the roof of the Town Hall, and are cut in relief on the parapet wall behind the Burns statue at Union Terrace.

1895—

CXLII. **Daniel Mearns.**

Lord Provost Daniel Mearns is the youngest son of the late Daniel Mearns, shipmaster in Aberdeen, by his wife Helen Adam, youngest daughter of the late William Adam, merchant and manufacturer in the Green, and one of the largest importers of hemp and flax from Russia in the early years of this century. He has for long period been closely associated with the shipping industry, and has within recent years done much to make Aberdeen what it is as one of the greatest fishing centres in the kingdom.



The Lord Provost entered the Town Council at November, 1876, as one of the members of the First Ward, afterwards known as S. Clements, and during the past twenty years has represented that ward at the Council, having been returned on each occasion when a poll was demanded by the greatest number of votes in his ward, a distinction perhaps unique in municipal annals. His service at the Harbour Board runs concurrently with that at the Council Board, and he was master of shoreworks

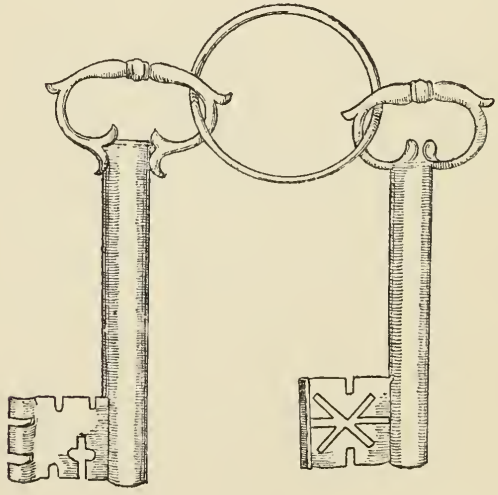
DANIEL MEARNS.

for three years from November, 1883, a magistrate for a similar period from March, 1886, and again from November, 1891, till his election to the chair.

During this long period of service, the Lord Provost has taken an active part in most of the schemes coming before the Council, especially in those dealing with the maintenance and improvement of the streets of the city, having acted for over eleven years as convener of that department. In the Shorelands Improvement Scheme he also took considerable interest, and the new street formed through the area was named Mearns Street in acknowledgment of that fact. In addition to the interest he took in municipal work, the Lord Provost has also been one of the most active members of the Harbour Board, and it is mainly to his efforts that the entrance channel, for many years regarded by the seafaring community as dangerous, has been put into its present safe condition. The provision of a graving dock, which has been the means of bringing and keeping so much work amongst the artisans of the city, was introduced into the Act of 1879 chiefly on his initiative. The fish market, the formation of the fish dock, or Albert Basin, the new harbour and other facilities presently being extended to Torry, now within the city, are works with which his name will always be associated. He also interested himself considerably in pushing forward the Harbour Commissioners Bill of last year, whereby the traders of the port were greatly relieved in the matter of harbour dues, and put on better terms to compete with their friends in the south. Since taking the chair in November, 1895, the provisional order for dealing with the Exchequer Row area became law; a new model lodging-house at East North Street has been resolved upon at a cost of £11,000 also new workshops and fire-engine station at King Street at an estimated outlay of £16,500. The new bathing station at the beach has been opened, and negotiations have been completed whereby great improvements will be effected in the widening of many of the suburban roads at little or no cost to the community.

One of the latest official acts of the Lord Provost was the presentation, in September, 1896, of an address of welcome to the Tsar and Tsaritsa on the occasion of their visit to Balmoral.

The services of the Lord Provost to his native city have not been allowed to pass without recognition, for, in 1895, besides being the recipient of several costly gifts, his bust in marble by D. W. Stevenson, R.S.A., was presented by a large number of subscribers for preservation in the Art Gallery. The bust represents him wearing the robe and chain of office of a magistrate, and is an excellent specimen of the sculptor's art.



APPENDIX.

I.—*Complaint to the Privy Council against* THOMAS MENZIES of Kirkhill and Durn, *and the family of Menzies*—*25th September*, 1590, *page* 112.*

"Complaint by the 'haill communitie, burgessis and craftismen of the Burgh of Abirdene' as follows:—'The auncient liberties and previlegeis of the said burgh, especialie anent the free electioun of magistratis thairof, hes bene thir fourescoir yeiris bigane pervertit and abrogat be the unlauchfull usurpatioun of the provestrie be the race of Menzeissis, and of all utheris cheiff officeis of the same be thame, thair kin, freindis and allya, expres aganis the lovable constitutionis of this realme and Actis of Parliament; and the saidis complenaris foriseing the grite hurte and detriment of the commounwele of the said burgh proceding upon the misrcule and misgovernament of the saidis personis, cheiflie in the delapidating, spending and waisting of the commoun gude and rentis thairof, sufferring of the commoun werkis and uther policie of the same to decay and becum ruynous, abstracting, selling and disponing upoun the artaillierie and munitioun quhilk suld have bene keipit and augmentit for defens of the said burgh in tyme of foreyne persute, setting and disponing upoun the commoun rentis without consent of the saidis complenaris, and in doing and undoing of all uthiris thingis at thair plesour,—the saidis complenaris in respect this mater tuicheit thame in speciall, seeing thay have borne and beiris the burding of the haill chargeis, taxationis and impositionis of the said burgh, and are cheiflie interest in cais ony inconvenient happin thairto, hes, at divers tymes heirtofoir, craved and desirit the saidis provestis, baillies and counsaill that, be commoun consent of the haill

* Privy Council Records, Vol. IV., p. 533.

inhabitantis, sum gude reformatioun micht be maid in materis concerning the commoun weill and policie of the same; speciallie, that ane counsaill suld be electit of the maist indifferent personis, craftismen, and burgessis, ane or twa at the maist of ane freindship; that the office of commoun clerkship suld be disponit be free vote and electioun; that the small custumes, commoun landis, takkis and uthiris casualiteis, commoun rentis and gude of the said burgh, micht be yeirlie roupit and sett to the best availl, conforme to the use and consuetude of uthiris burrowis; that compt micht be yeirlie maid of the commoun gude; that the auld evidentis, tounis buikis, registeris thairof, and buikis of the new and auld constitutionis concerning the positive lawis and actis maid be thair predicessouris, micht be brocht to licht and putt in sure custodie and keiping in sum neutrall and indifferent menis handis; and that sindrie utheris abuses and enormiteis within the said burgh micht be repairit and reformeit. Quhilkis thair maist equitable demandis hes bene from tyme to tyme denyit be the saidis provest baillies and counsaill, and they, in the meantyme, continew in the unlauchfull dispositioun of the saidis commoun rentis and uthiris foirsaidis to thair aune freindis and utheris of thair factioun and societie; quhairthrow the same is now sa dismemberit that it will skairslie beir furth the chargeis of the commissionaris direct to Parliamentis and Generall Counsallis, mekle les repair the decayit werkis of the said burgh, sua that with tyme the haill commoun werkis and policie thairof will utterlie decay.' Charge had been duly given to Mr. Thomas Menzeis of Durne, provost; Thomas Menzeis, his son and apparent heir; Alexander Forbes, Thomas Buk, baillies; William Menzeis elder; Robert Menzeis of Tullois, David Menzeis younger; David Menzeis elder, and certain others of the Council of the said burgh to appear this day and answer to the said complaint; and now Mr. Johnne Cheyne and Andro King, with sundry others of the pursuers, appearing personally, and the said Mr. Thomas Menzeis, Thomas Menzeis, and Thomas Buk being also present, with sundry of their colleagues, the King, with advice of his Council, ordains the said provost, baillies, council, deacons of the crafts, and others having vote in the election of magistrates within the said burgh, 'to proceid to the electioun of the same magistrates and utheris publict officiaris within the same burgh in like forme and maner as they have done the twa or three yeiris preceding,' in

presence of Ogilvy of Findlettir, Irving of Drum, Mr. James Johnnstoun, burgess of Edinburgh ; Robert Andirsoun, burgess of Perth ; and Robert Flesheour, burgess of Dundee ; to whom, or any four of them conjunctly (the lairds of Findlettir and Drum to be always two), the King gives commission to see and report to His Majesty and Council 'the samin forme and maner of electioun, togidder with thair owin opinionis quhidder thai think the same electioun meit to be allowit or alterit.' "

II.—*Act of Parliament* in favour of* Sir ROBERT FARQUHAR of Mounie —18*th July*, 1644, *page* 153.

The Estates of Parliament presentlie convenit be vertew of the last Act of the last Parliament Haldine be his Matie. and thrie Estates in Anno 1641. Haveing hard and considdered ane supplicatione givine in to them be Mr. Robert Ferq^r. merchant burges of Aberdene Desyreing payment of the soume of ane hundred thertie thrie thousand ane hundreth and tuo pundis tuelfe shillings 4^d. Scots money adebted and awand to him be the Publict and Estates of this Kingdome Wilke wes payable to him at Whitsonday 1643 yeeres conforme to ane Act of the Committie for the commoun burdings the first of Apryle 1643, As also craveing payment of the @ rentes of the soume abovewritten sen the said terme of Whitsonday 1643 as is appoynted be the Act foirsaid as the samene Act and supplicatione produced and red in audience of the parliament more fully proportes The Estates finds the desyre of the supplicatione just and reasounable and Therfore they ordeane Mr. Robert Ferq^r. supplicant to be satisfied and payed of the foirsaid soume of one hundred threttie thrie thousand ane hundreth and tuo pundis 12^s. 4^d. Scots money and of the @ rentes thereof sen Whitsonday 1643 yeeres out of the fynes foirfaultores and borrowed moneyes for the vse of the publict within the shereffdomes and boundis contenit [in] the commissione granted be the estates of Parliament to the Northerne business and that eftir Archbald Marques of Argile and George Jemisoune Proveist of Couper beis payed of the soumes conteyned in the preceptes

* Acts of Parliament, VI., p. 170.

rexiue granted to them be the saides estates, And thereby appoynted to be payed out of the fynes foirfaultores and borrowed moneyes within the boundis conteyned in the said Commissioune And for the supplicantes bettir payment The Estates be thir pntes. Gives warrand and command To the Comrs. and collectores for the publict within the boundis of the said Commissioune to make payment to the said Mr. Robert Ferqr. supplicant or any haveand his warrand of his said soume abovementioned, and of the @ rentes therof sen Whitsonday 1643 yeeres out of the soumes to be exacted borrowed or onywayes collected be them or ony of them rexiue perteaneing to the publict be way of fyne foirfaultor or leuing within the boundis of the said commissione Ay and whill the said Mr. Robert Ferqr. be paid of his said soume @ rentes therof The Marques of Argile and George Jamisoune being allwayes first paid of the said soumes rexiue conforme to these saidis preceptes Qr. anent thir pntes. shall be ane sufficient warrand.

III.—*Governors of Aberdeen.*

(a) Sir ALEXANDER IRVINE of Drum, 1440-41.

The murder of James I. at Perth in 1437 threw the country into such a turmoil that the citizens were glad to avail themselves of the services of this worthy knight for their protection, and in 1440 and again in the following year the burgesses appointed him Captain and Governor of the burgh. He was the first and last person who held such a position with the unanimous consent of the whole community.

The Christian name of this laird of Drum was Robert, but, succeeding to the estates on the death of his brother, Alexander, at the battle of Harlaw in 1411, he adopted his name, and, it is said, took up his brother's obligations so far as to marry his bride, Elizabeth Keith, the second daughter of Sir Robert Keith, Marischal of Scotland. The issue of the marriage was two sons, Alexander, younger of Drum, and a son who distinguished himself at the battle of Brechin in 1452.

The brass to the memory of Sir Alexander and his lady, as well as their effigies, are still to be seen in the Drum Aisle of S. Nicholas, but owing to the blanks in the inscription, the date of their deaths is uncertain.

(b) WILLIAM MOIR OF LONMAY, 1745.

The short-lived rebellion of 1745, unlike that of the '15, did not produce a Jacobite provost in Aberdeen, and so when Lord Lewis Gordon was appointed by Prince Charles, Lieutenant of the Counties of Aberdeen and Banff, he in turn nominated William Moir to be Governor of Aberdeen, and this position he held till the advance of Cumberland's troops in the spring of 1746 rendered it dangerous to exercise the duties longer.

William Moir came of a strong Jacobite family, being the eldest son of James Moir, II. of Stoneywood, by his second wife, Jean, a daughter of Alexander Abernethy of Mayen. He married a sister of General Fullerton of Dudwick, and had issue, William, his heir, and three daughters, Isabella, Catherine, and Jean, married to William Cumine of Pittulie in Buchan.

IV.—*Chief Magistrates of Old Aberdeen and Woodside.*

By virtue of the Aberdeen Corporation Act, 1891, the boundaries of the city were enlarged so as to include the burgh of barony of Old Aberdeen and the police burgh of Woodside. Torry, which was also included, was erected into a burgh of barony in 1495, but no trace has been discovered of any jurisdiction having ever been exercised by magistrates or others.

OLD ABERDEEN was erected into a burgh of barony in 1489, with the Bishop of Aberdeen as Superior, and the following list of those who held the office of chief magistrate, designed provost, is taken from the existing Registers, which commence in 1602. The office does not appear to have been very regularly preserved until about the middle of the eighteenth century, after which an appointment was made every year :—

1602- 5. Sir Thomas Gordon of Cluny.
1606-17.* Alexander Gordon of Cluny.
1640-46. Sir Alexander Gordon of Cluny.
1647-52. Alexander Gordon of Birsmoir.

* There is a break in the records from 1617-34.

1671-79. Mr. John Scougall, Commissary.
1680-89. James Scougall, Commissary (afterwards Lord Whithill).
1719-23.* John Buchan of Cairnbulg.
1756-60. David Dalrymple, Advocate, and Sheriff of Aberdeenshire (afterwards Lord Westhall).
1761-66. Sir James Reid.
1767-69. Thomas Buchan of Auchmacoy.
1770-77. Hon. Charles Boyd.
1778-84. Hugh M'Lean of Coll.
1785-93. Roderick M'Leod, Sub-Principal of King's College.
1794-1800. Hugh Leslie of Powis.
1801- 8. Robert Eden Scott, Professor of Moral Philosophy.
1809-10. Dr. William Jack, Professor of Mathematics.
(Resolution passed that provost continue in office for two years only.)
1811-12. Colonel Arthur Forbes.
1813-14. Captain George M'Innes.
1815-16. Dr. William Jack, Principal of King's College.
1817-18. William Paul, Professor of Natural Philosophy.
1819-20. Captain George M'Innes.
1821-22. Professor William Paul.
1823-24. Dr. William Jack.
1825. A. Norman Macleod.
1826-27. George M'Innes.
1828-29. John Leslie of Powis.
1830. James Buchan of Auchmacoy.
1831-37. Dr. William Jack.
1838-42. Hercules Scott, Professor of Moral Philosophy.
1843-44. Dr. William Jack.
1845-46. Dr. Francis Irvine.
1847-49. Alexander Nicol, Shipowner.
1850. Dr. Robert Dyce.
1851-55. George Ferguson, Professor of Humanity.
1856-58. Dr. James Gordon.
1859. John Clark.
1860-63. Rev. Principal Peter Colin Campbell.
1864-66. David Robert Morice, Advocate.
1867-70. William Milligan, D.D.
1871-75. Samuel Trail, D.D., LL.D.

* There is a break in the records from 1728-38.

1876-78.	John Struthers, M.D., Professor of Anatomy.
1879-81.	Very Rev. Principal William R. Pirie, D.D.
1882-84.	J. W. H. Trail, M.D., Professor of Botany.
1885-86.	George Thomson, Brewer.
1887.	John Clarke.
1888-90.	George Sinclair.

Woodside was formed into a police burgh on 7th June, 1868, and the election, up till 1879, was held in June of each year, but was then changed to November. The following is a list of the parties who held the office of chief magistrate till the amalgamation with Aberdeen in November, 1891 :—

1868-70.	John Crombie, Jun.
1871-73.	Dr. James E. Fowler.
1874-76.	John Crombie, Jun.
1877-85.	David Littlejohn, Advocate.
1886.	David Smith. Died on 21st November, 1886.
1886-89.	George Farquhar.
1890.	Charles Strachan.

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